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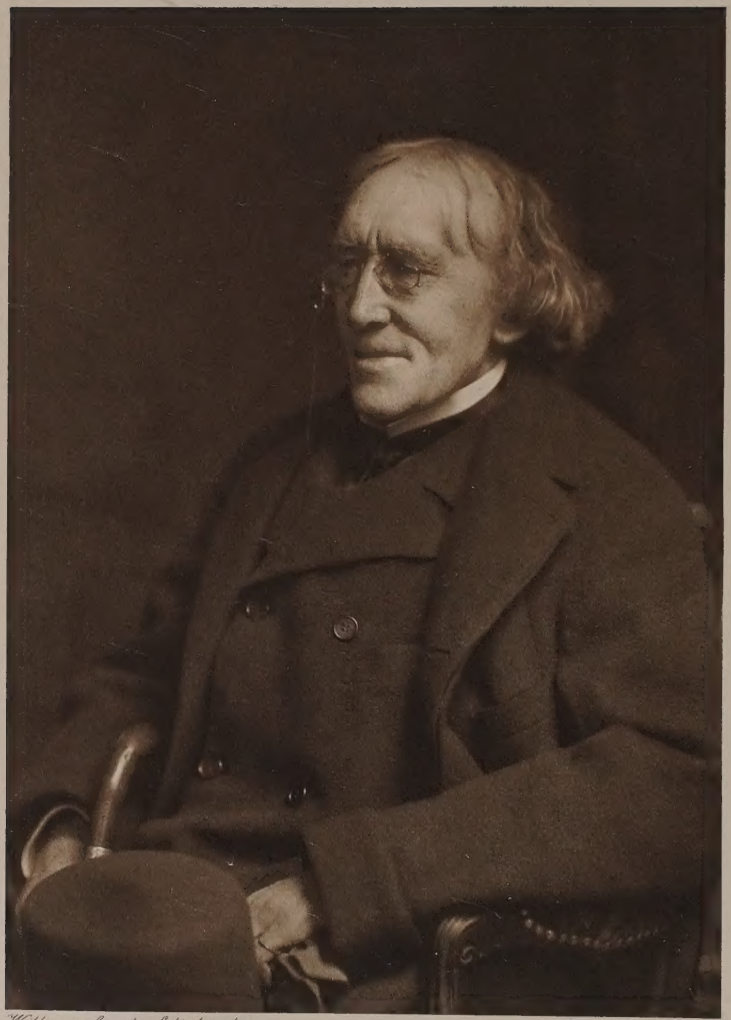
THE LIFE OF HENRY IRVING

"I believe in immortality, and my belief is strengthened with advancing years. Without faith in things spiritual, this life would indeed be a weary waste."

—Henry Irving.



William Crooke, Edinburgh. Walter L. Colls.

Henry Irving in 1904.

THE LIFE OF HENRY IRVING

BY

AUSTIN BRERETON

VOL. II.

WITH ONE PHOTOGRAVURE, TEN COLLOTYPE PLATES AND TWELVE OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA
1908

WESTFIELD UNIV. LONDON

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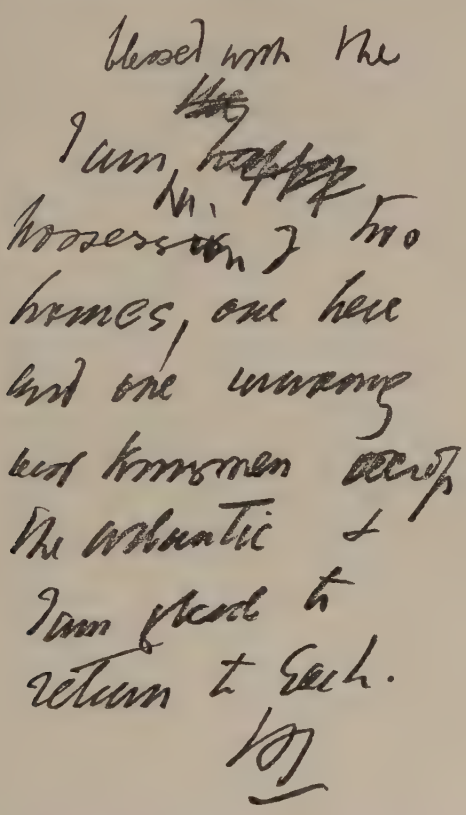
Henry Irving begins the first of his tours of America—His enormous receipts—The friendship of the people—Irving's intellectual quality—the admonition of the *Standard*—On board the *Yosemite*—Landing in America —21st October, 1883—A dinner at the Lotus Club—Mr. Whitelaw Reid's speech of welcome—Irving's reply.

Henry Irving appeared before the American public for the first time on 29th October, 1883, for the last on 25th March, 1904. During that period he played for precisely two hundred and nine weeks, or, in other words, four years. From the beginning to the end, he met with the unbounded appreciation of the playgoers of the United States of America. Their loyalty to him never wavered. From east to west, from north to south, he counted his friends and admirers by thousands. Facts, sometimes, are more convincing than argument, and it is useful to mention, as an indication of the commercial prosperity which attended him in America, that his receipts for the eight tours of that country amounted to the amazing sum of $3,441,321 94 cts., or, in English money, £711,016 18s. 4d. In one of his most successful tours—1899-1900—his average profit per week was £1,104 1s. 7d. His total profit on his eight tours amounted to $579,201 4 cts., or £119,669 12s. 5d. sterling. But far dearer to his heart than money, was the warmth of feeling with which he was greeted throughout these years. It has often been said of him that he was a diplomatist, like other public men who attain to eminence. But his diplomacy came from his innate kindness of heart, not from the desire to contrive for his own ends. Constantly doing good actions himself, he never forgot the slightest favour received, and, when occasion

offered, he repaid it ten times over. He certainly had no need for the exercise of diplomacy, as that art is generally understood and practised, in 1903. The words which he wrote for me on the eve of his last voyage to the United States, as his greeting to the American people, sprang from a full heart. They were the echo and remembrance of more true kindness than has ever been bestowed upon an Englishman in similar circumstances, although, strictly speaking, there is no parallel to Irving's connection with America.

He did not go to America as a stranger in 1883. Quite apart from his fame, which had been world-wide for years before, he had troops of friends among Americans of all ranks whom he had met in England. Then, again, the banquet at St. James's Hall in July, and his farewell tour of the provinces, brief though that was, had proved a huge source of advertisement. No player, appearing for the first time in a new country, had been so well heralded. Moreover, he knew that the great cities of America possessed critics of much discernment and that he would be fairly judged. Before starting on his voyage from Liverpool he had experienced a most encouraging example of American opinion from the pen of Mr. George W. Smalley, one of the most cultured and independent writers ever sent to represent a great American newspaper in London. At the end of a long article in the New York *Tribune*, he summed up the position of the actor: "What the public has made up its mind about is this, that Mr. Irving has an individuality of the most powerful kind; that you may like his acting, or dislike it, but you cannot be neutral; that his influence upon the dramatic art of his time has for years past been great, is steadily increasing, and is not likely to diminish. It is an influence, moreover, for good, an influence tending to purify and exalt the stage, and to exalt not less the ideal of art which has seldom been a high one in England for a long time together." Alluding to Lord Coleridge's remark as to the value of careful and accomplished acting allied to munificent and wise and intelligent expenditure in the presentation of plays of

Shakespeare and by lesser dramatists, he said: "No eulogy of that kind can be amiss, but I should be disposed to insist still more strongly on the intellectual quality of Mr. Irving's art. That is the secret of his hold upon the public, and that, on the whole, is what those who differ most on details most



"I am blessed with the possession of two homes, one here and one among our kinsmen across the Atlantic, and I am glad to return to each."—HENRY IRVING, 1903.

completely agree in applauding. The complaint about mannerisms has not much importance in the presence of that admission."

Irving knew of this, and of dozens of other discriminating judgments which had been passed upon him by Americans

in London. He knew that America would receive him with the knowledge and the appreciation which his great name deserved, and he knew that he would be treated with courtesy by the press of the United States. Fortunately, however, for his own peace of mind, he did not know—and he did not become aware of the circumstances until New York had attested its approval of his acting—that one of the most powerful of London newspapers had elected to wait until he was on the sea and unable to protest, in order to make a dastardly attack upon him. The vessel conveying Irving to America, it will be remembered, left Liverpool on 11th October, and the voyage occupied nearly ten days. On 17th October, while he was crossing the Atlantic, rejoicing in his hard-won triumphs and meditating fresh conquests, the *Standard* published one of the most insidious articles ever written against an actor.[1] It was, in effect, an incitement to the American people and press to reverse the judgment of his countrymen on Henry Irving. Such an audacious attempt to prejudice a great section of the public against an individual has seldom disgraced the press of this country. The article in question was a column in length, and its fifteen hundred words were aimed at the actor with the intention of arousing feeling against him. It was fortunate for the *Standard* that Irving's position was unassailable, and that the commercial success of his first tour in America was equal to its artistic effect. Had the result been otherwise, an action for libel would, there is little doubt, have resulted in substantial damages. The cloven hoof was shown in the opening sentence of this malicious "leader". "American theatre-goers and American critics" were told that they were "about to have an opportunity which, in the true interests of dramatic art and dramatic criticism, we sincerely trust will not be thrown away. There is travelling across the Atlantic at this moment from England to the United States a member

[1] In fairness to the *Standard* of to-day, it should be stated that the present proprietors, editorial staff, and leader-writers are not those of twenty-five years ago.

of the theatrical profession whom some people declare to be our greatest and all people allow to be our most conspicuous and celebrated living actor". This was well said, but mark what follows: "It is too late in the day now for any discriminating, much less any authoritative judgment to be passed in this country upon the merits of Mr. Irving as an actor. It would be as much a waste of breath," said the great Conservative organ of 1883, "to try to show that, whatever may be the intellect and the other qualities of Mr. Gladstone, he is not a great statesman, as to try to establish that Mr. Irving is not a very considerable actor in the highest walks of the histrionic art. Notoriety, enthusiasm, the exaggeration born of imitation, have settled the matter beyond the power of reversal on our own shores, as far as present judgment goes. The stream of popularity that has borne Mr. Irving into his present position on this side of the Atlantic has gone on rising and rising, swelling and swelling, until its volume has become irresistible, and those who have ventured to protest that his performances are marked by this or that defect, that in his conception of character he is lacking this attribute or that, have been set down as not so much fastidious and critical, as perverse, cantankerous, and possibly jealous"—which last statement, it may be observed, was hardly consistent with the truth. "Mr. Irving has had the good fortune," the article proceeded, "to excite as much honest and earnest dislike in the higher circles of criticism, as he has aroused honest and earnest sympathy from the masses and at the hands of the ordinary run of critics." It is to be presumed that the writer of the article was not acquainted with the *Standard's* enthusiasm, as frequently displayed in its columns, for Irving, or, perhaps, he counted the dramatic critic of that paper among "the ordinary run". In the words of Hamlet, "Thus bad begins and worse remains behind," for the article then made the stupendous statement that "numbers of excellent judges consider him a 'detestable' actor, and do not hesitate to say so". We are not told the names of these "numbers of excellent judges" who, if they

said any such thing, only said it in the privacy of their own circles, and, furthermore, only proved themselves very bad judges of acting, no matter how "excellent" they may have been in other spheres.

There is no occasion to wade through the remaining two-thirds of this sorry stuff. The *Standard's* injunction to the inhabitants of the United States must not, however, be omitted. "Cannot the American people, American critics, and American playgoers strike out a line of their own upon this subject, and contribute something fresh, something original, and something suggestive upon the merits or demerits of our principal interpreter of Shakespeare?" This pathetic plea was followed by one that was even longer and stronger, but to the same purport: "American audiences have a singularly favourable opportunity for showing that they can think and judge for themselves, and do not slavishly echo the criticisms of the English Press. We confess, for our own part, that though one has read many eulogistic notices of Mr. Irving, and has listened in private"—"in private," be it noted!—"to not a few opinions of a different complexion, it has been difficult to find anything written respecting him that deserved to be dignified with the description of serious and discriminating criticism"—from which one can only imagine that the leader-writer of the *Standard* lived with his head in the clouds. "Cannot New York, Boston, and Chicago," he implored, "supply us with a little of this material? Are we indulging in vain imaginings if we venture to hope that our cousins across the water will forget all that has been said and written about Mr. Irving and the Lyceum company on this side of the ocean, will go to see him with unprejudiced eyes and ears, and will send us, at any rate, a true, independent, and unconventional account of his gifts and graces, or the reverse, according as he and his companions really seem to them to deserve it?" The concluding words of this exhortation seem now as pitiful in their weakness as they were then contemptible in their endeavour. "Most Englishmen naturally will be gratified if the people of the United States

find Mr. Irving as tragic as so many people in this country consider" him, "but the gratification will be increased should it be made apparent that the conclusion has been arrived at by the exercise of an independent judgment, and if, in pronouncing it, fresh light is turned upon the mimetic art and disputed points of theatrical controversy. That Mr. Irving should fail in America nobody thinks possible. But his success will be all the greater if it be made plain that it reposes upon free, frank, and impartial criticism."

That Irving should have been thought worthy of such an attack in a leading London paper is, perhaps, a more convincing proof of his great position than all the eulogy which so upset the spleen of the *Standard* writer: that he should have withstood it, and come triumphantly through shoals of "free, frank, and impartial" criticism, is a still more satisfactory proof of his ability to rise superior to his foes. The article was malicious in intent, and, as it was widely quoted in America, it would have had very serious consequences had the object of its animadversion been anything less than a tremendous power. A long excerpt from the *Standard's* call to arms was cabled to America, and the New York *Herald*, in its editorial comment on the message, spoke of it as "a hint which will not be lost upon the theatrical critics". In September—that is to say, within a month of the *Standard* article—the writer of the present book had, in his first biography of Henry Irving, observed in his "Conclusion" to that record: "No other actor has so striven against and so completely conquered such apparently insurmountable obstacles. . . . He faced all manner of difficulties, and bore them all down with a resolution and courage that nothing could stand against. . . . The courage and strength of purpose in enduring the difficulties and attacks with which his professional life has been so persisently beset, must, indeed, have been enormous. No actor since the days of David Garrick has been so mercilessly and so persistently lampooned, and no other actor since Garrick's time has been less affected by such antagonism, or more brilliantly successful in spite of

it." It is remarkable that his own countrymen should have endeavoured to create antagonism towards him at the outset of his first tour in America. That the attempt failed was no fault of theirs. It was only partially successful: it gave the cue to one or two writers, as will be seen presently, to indulge in "impartial" criticism, but it did not affect the mass of newspaper writers, nor did it prevent the American playgoer from extending the most cordial of greetings to England's representative actor.

The welcome which was given to Henry Irving on the occasion of this, his first visit to the United States, could not possibly have been more demonstrative of good-will. The present writer, as the representative of a syndicate of English newspapers, had preceded the actor to America. He witnessed the opening scenes, and, therefore, speaks from personal knowledge. The following account of Irving's arrival in New York and of his first appearances in that city, appeared at the time in a London journal and is a "plain unvarnished tale":—

"At five o'clock in the morning of Sunday, 21st October, 1883, a small group of men assembled at the wharf belonging to one of the great ocean steamship companies. The place, which was situated at the west side of the harbour of New York, bore a mysterious appearance. It was but faintly lighted, and the visitors were silently passed on from the outer gate of the shed to the furthermost point by the waterside. There one of the finest yachts of which America can boast, by name the *Yosemite*, lay at anchor, with her engines ready, eager to do their work. The sailors were alert, and the watchful captain waited instructions to start on his journey. Rapidly enough the intending voyagers arrived, and all were ready to set forth. All? nay, in good truth, not all: a certain learned doctor of medicine was missing. Without him the party would be incomplete. It was asserted that he had not come on board; yet he was renowed as a punctual man. No doubt he had been detained by some call of duty, but he would surely be at the vessel presently. Two figures

waited for him at the wharf gate, ready to pounce upon him the moment he made his appearance. The other passengers occupied themselves with vague conjectures as to his non-appearance, and a little feeling of disappointment was general on board the yacht. The advisability of starting without the missing doctor was being discussed, when who should emerge from the staircase leading to the saloon but the object of all the delay and discussion. He had come on board early and without being observed, and, being a wise man, he had retired below to finish the peaceful slumber from which he had been disturbed in order to join the party which had been formed for the purpose of welcoming Henry Irving to America. Good feeling being thus restored, the yacht prepared to set forth. A rope, some four inches in diameter, not being properly tempered, snapped like a thread of silk, and released the vessel from her moorings; the lantern lights were extinguished and the *Yosemite* steamed down the harbour. The morning light broke cold and grey; the atmosphere was chilling.

"Whilst the yacht is nearing her destination, and that large four-masted steamer, the *Britannic*, lying yonder at the mouth of the harbour is waiting to be passed by the quarantine officer, let us look at our passengers. That short man there with the dark eyes and thoughtful face, is Lawrence Barrett, one of America's leading actors, who will appear before you at the Lyceum Theatre next Easter. He it is who has had a great share in organising this meeting of welcome. His companion, standing close by, with genial face and sparkling eye, evidently, say you, a low-comedian, is W. J. Florence, whom you have already seen at the Gaiety Theatre. He with the dreamy face and wistful eye, is one of the purest and simplest and, at the same time, one of the most brilliant writers of America; he is a graceful poet and a lover of the beauty of our England. He has written delightfully about our country, and you certainly ought to know his name—it is William Winter. You are English; you know that the land you live in is beautiful, and you pass over the admiration of a

foreigner with the feeling that his description could not match the charm of the reality. This delightful writer is in earnest conversation with a man somewhat younger in years, also a writer, whose name is not altogether unknown to you, who has travelled across the Atlantic in order to be present at one of the greatest events in the history of the English stage. But the sound of a cannon booming forth across the water announces that the *Britannic* is neared. A small boat is lowered from the *Yosemite*, and the two actors—Mr. Lawrence Barrett and Mr. William J. Florence—are rowed towards the great steamer. But the doctor has not yet been on board the *Britannic*, so that some little time is lost before the friends can meet (they are very cautious, these Americans). At last, however, the American tragedian and the English greet each other; there is silence between them for a moment, then the word of welcome is spoken, and all the boat is alive with excitement. Mr. Irving is transferred from the *Britannic* to the *Yosemite*, and, as he steps on the yacht, one notices that he is paler than usual and shaken by nervous excitement. He is quickly followed by the partner in his triumphs, Miss Ellen Terry, who looks wonderfully well, and is in excellent spirits. The yacht moves off, and the *Britannic* gives a parting salute to the actor.

"The saloon of the *Yosemite* bears an animated aspect. Standing erect in the centre of the room is Mr. Irving, brighter, and evidently restored to his self-possession, surrounded by his faithful friends,[1] Bram Stoker, H. J. Loveday, and Joseph Hatton, and some thirty newspaper reporters. [Mr. Stoker, Mr. Hatton, and the newspaper men had been transferred from their own vessel to the more comfortable *Yosemite*.] There occurs a bewildering series of questions, to all of which the actor replies calmly and with excellent taste.

"Whilst Mr. Irving is engaged with the reporters, a far different scene is being enacted on deck. Miss Terry has

[1] The members of the company left Liverpool by the *City of Rome* and arrived in New York on 19th October. They were in charge of Mr. Stoker. Mr. Loveday travelled with his chief on the *Britannic*.

been persuaded to stay in the open air and view the magnificent suspension-bridge, which connects New York with Brooklyn, and the harbour of the city wherein she is about to make her first appearance in America. The sight of the unfamiliar country reminds her of her kinds friends at home, and for a moment she looks sad. Her eyes are dimmed by tears for a moment, which vanish as quickly as an April shower, to give place to a smile of delight as she is told of the brilliant reception with which she is certain to meet from her new admirers. The yacht has reached its destination, and Mr. Irving and Miss Terry set foot for the first time in America. This is before ten o'clock in the morning, and, after having undergone the tedious form of signing a declaration and passing their luggage, the distinguished visitors drive to their respective hotels. Mr. Irving is located at the Brevoort House, an old-fashioned and fashionable house, close to Washington Square, where he receives his many visitors, and is still besieged by the newspaper reporters. Miss Terry is at the Hotel Dam, not in, but near, Union Square, and within a stone's throw of the Star Theatre.

"From the time of his arrival in New York until the date of his first performance there, Mr. Irving was kept exceptionally busy. What with rehearsals in the mornings, and dinners in the evening, he was fully occupied. Miss Terry might have been seen constantly driving in the vast Central Park. The time passed quickly enough until the following Saturday, 27th October, when Mr. Irving was entertained at a banquet given in his honour by the members of the Lotus Club. The chair was taken by Mr. Whitelaw Reid,[1] the proprietor of the New York *Tribune*, and Mr. Irving made his first public speech in America.

"The night of 29th October, 1883, will be long memorable in the history of the stage as the date of the first appearance in America of Mr. Henry Irving. The Star Theatre, which had been selected for the scene of the actor's triumphs, was,

[1] The Hon. Whitelaw Reid, the American Ambassador in London in succession to Mr. Choate.

in days gone by, fashionable enough, and situated in the best part of New York. But the residents of the city have, from time to time, retired 'up town'—the 'West End' of New York—and the Star Theatre had been left behind, until it is now surrounded by shops, and has become, in point of fact, situated at a greater distance from the more select quarters of New York than any of its rivals. At first sight, the small Star Theatre is not prepossessing. Its approaches are of the commonest order, and the flimsy passages, only partially covered by the roughest matting, are a great contrast to the solidity and grandeur of the Lyceum. However, 'the play's the thing,' after all, and the building wherein it is acted matters but little. 'The Bells' had been chosen for the play wherein Mr. Irving should first appear in America, and on the night of its first performance the theatre was crowded—literally crowded—although the reports in a certain London paper would lead you to suppose that such was not the case. True, there were some vacant seats, but what of that? Early in October all the best seats for Mr. Irving's engagement had been sold, and many of them had fallen into the hands of the 'speculators'. These enterprising gentlemen had bought all the seats that they could possibly obtain, and had been unable to dispose of all their places. The mode of business adopted by these leeches is to buy the best seats in the house for a popular performance, and sell them for whatever they will bring. If they had never sold a single seat for Mr. Irving's engagement, the loss would have been all on their own side. These speculators are the most abominable nuisance with which a theatre was ever infected. From four o'clock in the afternoon it is impossible to pass the theatre without being requested to purchase, at exorbitant prices, seats for the evening's performance. As time wears on, the prices become lower, with the result that stragglers—having purchased seats for a comparative trifle—keep dropping into the theatre, disturbing the audience, and annoying the actors. The reason why some seats were unoccupied on the 29th of October was that for many hours before the opening of the theatre, New

York had been deluged with rain; the people who had their seats already reserved were, of course, in attendance, whilst those who had not tickets wisely preferred to remain at home instead of getting wet through on the remote chance of buying a seat from the speculators. But the theatre was, nevertheless, crowded, and those who witnessed the audiences which subsequently rushed to the Star Theatre can have no doubt as to the financial success of Mr. Irving's American tour.

"When Mr. Irving stepped on the stage, attired as Mathias, in 'The Bells,' he received a truly magnificent greeting. The applause was long-continued, and the great actor had every cause to be satisfied with his welcome. He played with all his old power, and instantly achieved a triumph, although it was not until the climax of that terrible dream scene in the last act that the audience gave vent to their enthusiasm. The papers were occupied next day with discussing Mr. Irving's style of acting, and, for the most part, praising his interpretation of Mathias. The actor had achieved a triumph in one character, and he immediately courted judgment in another. 'The Bells' was succeeded on the following night by 'Charles the First,' and excitement was kept at fever heat by the announcement that Miss Ellen Terry would appear as the Queen in that play. From the moment that Miss Terry set foot on the stage she conquered her audience, and made an instantaneous success. There have not been two opinions concerning her. The audience had never seen any actress so delightful and fascinating. The Queen Henrietta Maria, of Mr. Wills's play, with her charming comedy and delicate pathos, won all hearts, and Miss Terry was rightly and freely applauded to the echo. No actress ever achieved so immediate and so complete a success. Mr. Irving's impersonation of the King was also greatly admired. In two nights he built up a success that was heralded far and near; but he did not rest upon his laurels. On 5th November he produced 'Louis XI.,' and again succeeded in rousing the enthusiasm of his audience and in eliciting unstinted praise from the press. On the 6th came 'The Merchant of

Venice,' when, in the character of Shylock, Mr. Irving once more secured the sympathies of his audience, and Miss Terry, as Portia, again won a resplendent success." [1]

Countless columns of description and interviews appeared on the day after Irving's arrival in New York, each paper trying to outdo the other in vividness and hospitality. This was how Henry Irving appeared to the reporter of the *Tribune* on that cold Sunday morning: "Expectation began to wane, and hardly any one was on the lookout, when a tall, spare man, habited in a short blue pilot-cloth overcoat and wearing a broad-brimmed soft felt hat, walked quietly, with a peculiar, springy step, up to the taffrail and leaned over. The wide-brimmed hat was seen to over-shadow a peculiarly striking face. Long grey hair, thrown carelessly back behind the ears, clean-shaven features remarkable for their delicate refinement, united with the suggestion of virile force, and a pair of eye-glasses perched on the rather aquiline nose, combined to remove any lingering doubt that it was Henry Irving, the greatest living English actor. Mr. Irving looked at the crowd" of newspaper men, "and a glimmer of a smile lit up his features and intensified the peculiar dimple in the lower lip as he saw that he was unnoticed save by a few." In the various interviews, he recapitulated his work at the Lyceum, and insisted that he had made his position by his acting alone, and without the help of that scenery on which his detractors were ever harping.

The Lotus Club dinner was a remarkable compliment, for it took place on the Saturday before the first appearance, on the Monday following, of Irving in America. It was held in the club rooms, which were far too small to accommodate the two hundred and odd members and guests. Indeed, all the diners could not be seated in one room, and, for this reason, the speeches of welcome could not be delivered in a formal manner, for many of those assembled had to stand in corners and doorways. But this absence of convention only served to increase the good humour and the friendly

[1] Written by Austin Brereton, in November, 1883.

spirit of the occasion. Addresses, in addition to the President's speech, were given by various fluent speakers, including Chauncey M. Depew, General Horace Porter, and E. A. Oakey Hall, while the actors present included Lawrence Barrett, Joseph Jefferson, and W. J. Florence. Mr. Whitelaw Reid, in the course of a delightful speech, said: "We know our friendly guest as the man whom a great, kindred nation has agreed to accept as its foremost living dramatic representative. We know that his success has tended to elevate and purify the actor's calling, to widen and better its influence. We know the scholarship he has brought to the representation of the great dramatists, the minute and comprehensive attention he has given to every detail, alike of his own acting and the general management. His countrymen do not say that if he were not the foremost actor in England he would be the first manager; they declare that he is already both. We bid him the heartiest of welcomes to a country where he may find not unworthy brethren. Our greeting indeed takes a tone of special cordiality not so much from what we know of his foreign repute, or from our remembering the great assemblage of representative countrymen gathered to give him their farewell and God-speed. It comes even more from our knowing him as the friend of Edwin Booth and Joseph Jefferson and Lawrence Barrett and John McCullough and William Florence. . . . It would not be fair to our distinguished but unsuspicious guest, adventuring into these foreign parts, if, before sitting down, I did not warn him that all this, and much more which he is likely to hear, is said around the dinner-table. Let him not think that he wholly knows us, and is fairly naturalised, until he has read the papers the morning after his first performance. What they may contain, no living man knoweth. Others have sometimes groaned that we accord them, in fact, the same distinguished honour we give our national bird—the turkey—which we first feed and afterwards carve up. . . . I will detain you no longer. I give you, gentlemen, Our Guest—

'O trumpet set for Shakespeare's lips to blow'—

Health to Henry Irving, and a hearty welcome!"

In responding to this toast, Irving made the first of his many public speeches in America. "Mr. Irving," said a newspaper report of the reply, "spoke in measured tones, and with a singularly clear and effective enunciation, his frequent ironical sallies being received with bursts of laughter and applause." Much of the speech touched upon ephemeral points, and it is only necessary to cite those in which Irving referred to his method and work. "I do not intend to bore you," he said, "with any ideas of mine about my art, either histrionically or pictorially. My method, histrionically, is a very simple one. I merely endeavour to go to the fountain head to get my inspiration; and by what my work is, I know that you will judge it, and judge it fairly. I am quite sure of this: that no people will go to a theatre with a greater desire to do justice to an actor than you will go to the theatre to see me on Monday night. If you like me, you will express it, and, if you do not like me, still you will treat me kindly. Our art is cosmopolitan. Every actor has his own methods, as every painter has his methods, and every writer has his style. The best actor among us has a great deal to learn. It is only at the end of his career that he finds how short is his life and how long is his art. . . . I thank you with all my heart for the greeting that you have given me. I thank you for the brotherly hand that you have extended to me. And, if anything could make one feel at home, and comfortable, and sure of having a real good time amongst you, it is the cordiality with which I have been received to-night. The very accents of your hearty greeting, and the very kindness of your genial faces, tell me that there are in your hearts good and kind overflowing wishes. Gentlemen, I thank you with all my heart, and I feel that 'there is a bond between us that dates from before to-night'."

CHAPTER II.

October-November, 1883.

The 29th of October—"It is I!"—Irving's first appearance on the American stage—Reception by the audience—Tributes of the press—A favourable consensus of opinion—His speech on the first night—His impressions—Difference between American and English audiences—"Charles the First"—Another success—Miss Ellen Terry's first appearance in America—A quaint "criticism"—A busy month—An American critic on mannerisms—Irving's methods and personality—A varied bill—A grateful speech—Some remarkable figures—Another appreciation—A poem of Welcome.

The New York critics, despite the mandate from London, did not cut up Irving. On the contrary, although one or two of them were affected by the injunction of the *Standard*, the utmost fairness was exhibited, and the general verdict was in favour of the actor. It is to be observed that he elected to make his first appearance in America in "The Bells". That was the only piece he played at the Star Theatre, New York, on Monday, 29th October, 1883. A vivid description of the scene appeared in the New York *Herald* on the following morning. It conveys an accurate impression of the effect created by the representative of Mathias: "An audience notable even in the house which is foremost in the traditions of fashion, an attention persistent and polite, and enthusiasm yielded with spontaneity of sincerity, and caution of good judgment, welcomed Henry Irving last night to the American stage. The curtain which rose at the Star Theatre on an artist fresh from the adulation of cultured people, but yet uncertain of the favour which a strange public might accord to manners and methods hitherto untried before them, went down upon him at the finish assured of their acceptation by the testimony of intoxicating homage. The endorsement of

Irving as a great actor was distinct and unmistakable. His rendering of the part of the crime-haunted Burgomaster, tortured by fears and oppressed by his tragical secret, will remain in the memory of those who witnessed it as an achievement artistic in realisation, marvellously picturesque and effective in all respects. Early the carriages thronged the street in the moist, murky night, and the drabbled pavement, shining in the reflection of the electric lights at the main entrance, was covered with clusters of sightseers, and the audience was sufficiently representative to give voice to the opinions of the community, and sufficiently select to entitle its decisions to value. Before it Henry Irving made his first appearance.

"The entrance of Mathias was electrical in its effect, as a salutation cordial beyond any theretofore accorded to a stranger on the American stage, and conclusively proclaimed the general feeling. A storm of applause swept through the house. The actor stood bowing his acknowledgments, and was constrained to begin his lines before the enthusiasm of the audience was exhausted. The scene was brought to a close by that cry of agony which the mental presentation of crime wrings from the Burgomaster, causing him to sink beneath the burden of his terror. Then arose from the whole house a tumult of hand-clapping. The first greeting had been one of cordiality to the actor: this was a tribute to his art. The dream in the last act showed Irving at his best. For this scene the actor had reserved his strength; for this the anticipations of the audience had been growing keener. They heard the accusation, and witnessed consciousness of guilt struggling with effrontery in the face and gestures of the actor; the terror which overpowers him at the sight of the mesmerist they saw mastering his self-control, and then they yielded themselves up to the actor, reproducing in his tragical somnambulism memories which had haunted his life. The house was hushed; the low monotone of music was subdued; the voice of the man before them, throbbing with all ecstasy of human terror and human suffering, appalled them; his

face, standing out in pale radiance amid vague and shadowy profiles around him, reflected every emotion with frightful distinctness. The best tribute to the power of the artist was the silence in which his work was watched, and the eagerness with which thoughtless applause was hushed till the climax was reached. Only when the curtain fell upon the death-scene—the more vivid for its simplicity—did the feelings of the audience find vent, and Mr. Irving was summoned out again and again by enthusiastic encores. Irving's opening night was over. Of his own art, chiefly did the play afford a chance for criticism. The simplicity of setting permitted of none of those effects and careful details for which Irving

Henry Irving's first appearance in America.
Star Theatre, New York.
Monday evening, 29th October, 1883.

THE BELLS.

Mathias	Mr. Irving.
Walter	Mr. Carter.
Hans	Mr. Johnson.
Christian	Mr. Terriss.
Doctor Zimmer	Mr. Haviland.
Notary	Mr. Harbury.
President of the Court	Mr. Tyars.
Clerk of the Court	Mr. Harwood.
Mesmerist	Mr. Archer.
Catherine	Mrs. Pauncefort.
Sozel	Miss Harwood.
Annette	Miss A. Coleridge.

Note.—"The Bells" was the only piece played on this occasion.

made the Lyceum noted, and which he reserved for other plays to exhibit. The voice of the audience was manifestly in his favour."

The articles in the other morning papers were all to the same effect. The *Sun* said: "When Irving came upon the stage he was received with an outburst of feeling so warm, spontaneous, demonstrative in character as to be fairly deafening. People rose to their feet and shouted their welcome at him as if they would never tire of it. The reception was, perhaps, the most enthusiastic that any stranger ever enjoyed at our hands. At the end of the first act he was re-

peatedly called out. When the final curtain fell the audience remained seated until, in response to imperative demand, he came forward, and, in a few well-chosen words and with evident emotion, expressed thanks for the kindness with which he had been greeted, the feelings with which he should ever recur to it, no matter in what condition or circumstance he might find himself." And the *Tribune* was, if possible, even more emphatic: "The audience that greeted Irving last night in the Star Theatre, where he made his first professional appearance in America, received him not as a stranger but as an honoured friend. A more brilliant audience has never been seen. A more cordial welcome was never uttered. No display of morbid spiritual vivisection has been seen upon the stage that approaches, or even resembles, the dream of Mathias as acted by Henry Irving. The audience was completely spellbound during this scene. In all our long backward vista of recollection we find no parallel to this sustainment of tremendous agony in that most difficult of all dramatic conditions, soliloquy. Here, undoubtedly, is the essential spring of Irving's power. He wields most fascinating and victorious magnetism, which is essentially personal to him. Finally, after the strained attention bestowed on the last great act, a loud continued call was made for Irving, who appeared, bowed, and retired. Shouting and clapping were kept up, until he came forward a second time, and standing before the curtain, made a short speech, in a voice broken with emotion."

That brief speech on the opening night, was as follows: "Ladies and Gentlemen,—I believe it is a custom with you to allow an actor to thank you for the pleasure you have given to him; and I will avail myself of that custom now, to say that I thank you with all my heart and soul. It seems to me that the greatness of your welcome typifies the greatness of your nation. I thank you and 'beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks'. Let me say that my comrades are also deeply sensible of your kindness, and let me add that I hope you will give a warmer welcome, if such were possible, than

I have received, to my associate and friend, Miss Ellen Terry, who will have the honour of appearing before you to-morrow night. And, finally, if it be not a liberty, will you allow me to express the hope that 'our loves may increase even as our days do grow'." Immediately after the performance, he was interviewed in regard to his reception and the audience. "I never played before a more responsive or sympathetic audience," he said. "It did not miss a point. I could tell all through the play that every motion I made was being carefully watched; that every look, gesture, and tone was carefully observed. I had not been five minutes on the stage before I knew that I had control of my hearers, and that I could make every point in the play tell. Then the silence of the people—the greatest compliment that could be paid to one in such a play—was always succeeded by genuine applause at the end of the act. . . . It is not presumption in me to say that I am sure I was judged solely on my merits, and that the audience went away pleased with me. There were times to-night when I could feel the sympathy of my hearers—actually feel it."

THE FIRST WORDS SPOKEN BY HENRY IRVING BEFORE AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE WHEN, AS MATHIAS IN "THE BELLS," HE APPEARED ON THE STAGE OF THE STAR THEATRE, NEW YORK, 29TH OCTOBER, 1883.

He detected differences between the judgment of the New York audience and some of those in England in regard to "The Bells". For instance, "in the first part of the play, English audiences laughed a good deal, quite boisterously, in fact, at some of the comedy scenes. The absence of this to-night,

I think, was due to the fact that the people were straining to get the exact run of the play, and were labouring under anxiety—it is not presumption if I say so—to see me." Asked if Mathias was not his greatest rôle, he replied: "My best? Well, now, that's hard to say. There is no ground for comparison—Charles the First is absolutely different; he is full of qualities that are absent from Mathias. I cannot name a character in which I feel that I am best. I am fond of the part of Mathias, it is true." A question from the interviewer in regard to the scenery, brought forth a characteristic response: "You prompt me to mention a particular point. Did you notice how little the scenery had to do with the play? I have it so on purpose. Why, there is practically no scenery. I try to get as near truth as possible, as Caleb Plummer says. I have sometimes heard that I rely on scenery. So far I do: if it were the hovel of King Lear, I would have a hovel, and if it were the palace of Cleopatra, I would make it as gorgeous as the possibilities of art would allow." The interview was closed with his reply to the question, "Do you look upon your reception to-night as a success?" "In every way," was the answer. "One of your greatest actors told me that American audiences are proverbially cold on first nights. He was trying to save me from a possible disappointment. In addition to this, 'The Bells' is not a play for applause, but for earnest, sympathetic silence. Need I say that the demonstrations which burst forth on every occasion that good taste would allow, are the best evidences that to-night I have won an artistic triumph?"

On the next evening, Tuesday, 30th October, "Charles the First" was given, this play having been chosen as a direct contrast to "The Bells". The dissimilarity between the characters of Mathias and the idealised King gave Irving an opportunity of proving to the American critic and playgoer his wonderful versatility—and it was necessary, as the actor well knew, to strike quickly for effect in the United States. After the second act, the long-continued applause, from every part of the house, was proof of success. The *Herald* reported

the incident as "one of the grandest results that any actor has achieved in New York for years. The performance was profoundly conceived, acted out with infinite care, elaborated with rare skill, and invested with naturalness that deserved all praise. Irving, in his finale, merited fully every word that has been written of his power, intensity, and dramatic excellence; and he was enthusiastically called before the curtain, in order that the audience might assure him of that verdict." The *Tribune* gave a long and luminous account of the play and of the chief character. Irving's acting as the King it described as "calmly vigorous with the weight of personal character; various with the play of a fine intellect; excellent for its even sustainment of royal dignity; richly complex in its elaborate, courtly manners; and fraught equally with sombre gravity and tender feeling. The part admits of no wild outburst of morbid frenzy, and of no fantastic treatment. Royal authority, moral elevation, and domestic tenderness are the chief elements to be expressed; and Mr. Irving found no difficulty in expressing them. What most impressed his auditors was his extraordinary physical fitness to the accepted ideal of Charles Stuart, combined with the passionate earnestness and personal magnetism that enable him to create and sustain a perfect illusion. This performance is less striking than that of Mathias, less relative to the imagination and the passions, and therefore less indicative of the characteristic attributes of his genius. But it is rounded and complete; and to the student it is especially significant, as indicative of the actor's method of applying what is termed 'natural' treatment to the poetic drama. Mr. Irving presents the perfection of aristocracy. There is a moment in this performance—when the King stands before the fire-place, just after his dismissal of Cromwell and Ireton—that seems to take you into the literal presence of Charles the First, even as he lived and acted. The more this impersonation is studied the finer, indeed, does it seem to be, and the more beauties, of this subtle order, does it disclose. Mr. Wills's play has not provided a great situation for anybody it introduces, and

Mr. Irving's acting is, therefore, the more remarkable for the illusion he sustains and the effects he produces by means of personal character and admirable art. The blemishes are in the elocution. Mathias is the greater performance of the two: not in moral attributes, weight of character, gracious and lovely personal traits, or the fine detail of manners; but in power to deal with the passions through the imagination, and to sustain a human identity in an ideal region of terror and pathos." The same paper gave great praise to Miss Ellen Terry who, as Queen Henrietta Maria, made her first appearance on the American stage. She received a most enthusiastic welcome, "and was called before the curtain again and again, as the night wore on. Her dazzling beauty as the Queen, and her strange personal fascination—in which a voice of copious and touching sweetness is conspicuous—would partly explain this result. But, 'There's more in't than fair visage'. The Queen has to exhibit impetuosity and caprice. She has to express conjugal tenderness and to illustrate a woman's fidelity to the man whom she loves, when that man is in trouble and danger. She has to ask a boon from a tyrant, and to turn upon him, in scorn and noble pride, when repulsed. The situations are conventional. What shall be said of the personality that can make them fresh and new? Miss Terry is spontaneous, unconventional, and positively individual, and will use all characters in the drama as vehicles for the expression of her own. This in Queen Henrietta Maria was a great excellence. Miss Terry's acting has less mind in it than that of Mr. Irving, though not deficient here, but it proceeds essentially from the nervous system—from the soul. There were indications that her special vein is high comedy; but she was all the woman in the desolate farewell scene that ends the piece, and she melted every heart with her distress, even as she had charmed every eye with her uncommon loveliness. With eloquence and with spiritual majesty, she possesses a sweetness that softens the hard lines of ancient tragic form, and leaves the perfect impression of nature."

Of course, there were some quaint notices—they cannot be called criticisms—of these first performances in New York. One of the most amusing of these reports was that which appeared in the *Star* on the day after the production of Mr. Wills's drama: "People who have seen Henry Irving in England say that he improves upon acquaintance. Last night he was seen at the Star Theatre in W. G. Wills's drama of 'Charles the First'. Mr. Irving did improve upon acquaintance, because he proved to be a better preacher than he was on the first night. He had in 'Charles the First' a drama full of strong incidents, of well-considered poetical thoughts and situations that are at once dramatic and poetic. Fechter would have made the hero of Mr. Wills's historical tragedy a character which would have thrilled every man and woman who saw him, so would the late James W. Wallack, Jr., so would Edwin Booth, but Mr. Irving preached the monarch's speeches as though there were no pathos, no tenderness, no poetry in the lot of the unhappy king.

"But it must be confessed Mr. Irving has a voice in which there is no little melody. It may be the melody of the melodeon rather than the grand organ, but still there is melody in it; and when he employs the orchestra to add to its effect, it is certainly harmonious. What, however, seems to be entirely lacking in Mr. Irving is sympathy. He is always posing, and he posed just about as much as Charles as he did as Mathias. In fact, he is a poser in every way. When you expect—and have a right to expect—that he should do something grand, he drops into a humdrum monotone. Then, when it is least expected, he will do something that is notable, not for its magnetism, but for its picturesqueness. As for his performance of Charles, it can only be said that if that unhappy monarch sputtered and strutted and forgot the dignity of a king as Mr. Irving did last night, it was a charity to cut off his head.

"Miss Ellen Terry, of whom the New York public had expected so much, proved little better than an average walking lady in the earlier parts of the play, but in the last act

she proved as good a stock actress as Miss Coghlan. It seems to be one of the anomalies of the modern stage that the men are monopolising it, and the women have to play second fiddle. Miss Terry plays it in a very sweet and euphonious minor key, and that is all. In the last act she struck a higher note, but what she did was not par excellence. The other members of the supporting cast, though specially imported, were not phenomenal. Mr. Terriss is a good jeune premier, but Mr. F. Tyars made of Oliver Cromwell a person who could never have dissolved Parliament—he was so weak and impotent. Of the rest nil. Of the engagement of Mr. Irving, judging from the first two nights, it is a problem whether it will be an artistic success or a popular failure."

To the honour of the New York press, it should be said that there was little of this silly stuff written about Irving or Miss Terry. On the contrary, there were columns of appreciative, brilliant, and discriminating criticism whenever he played a new part. And these first four weeks in New York were exceptionally busy, for, in succession to "The Bells," and "Charles the First," there came "Louis XI.," "The Merchant of Venice," "The Lyons Mail," and "The Belle's Stratagem". His Louis created a vivid impression. "His fame is high, in this particular part," said the *Tribune*, "and it soon became evident that his fame is deserved. It was one of those exceptional performances that may justly be called great. It surpassed that of Charles Kean in the same character. It was appalling in its truth and power." At the end of a luminous account of Irving's interpretation of Louis, in the *Tribune*, Mr. Winter had a significant and valuable paragraph in regard to those "mannerisms," about which so much has been written in connection with Henry Irving: "Much is said about his 'mannerisms'. It is a convenient word, and it seems to be freighted with a vast significance. 'The Spanish fleet thou canst not see,' says the Governor, in 'The Critic,' 'because it is not yet in sight.' Nothing solaces the puzzled mind like one of these comprehensive and final reasons. Yet it might not be amiss to

remember that genius is a law to itself, and that its success in art is the vindication of its means. One of the greatest orators that ever lived was Rufus Choate; and, as all competent judges who ever heard him speak will testify, Rufus Choate's oratory defied all the laws that have ever been set down for the government of that art. So much was this the case, that another great orator, Wendell Phillips, once referred to Choate as 'a monkey in convulsions'. The seeming chaos, however, had a central purpose and a law; and the orator was always triumphant. Furthermore, there never was an actor, that attained to eminence, who was not distinctively marked as Mr. Irving is with personal peculiarities. Garrick sputtered. Mossop inflated himself like the arrogant and bellicose turkey. Edmund Kean croaked like a raven. John Philip Kemble had chronic asthma and spoke in a high falsetto. Macready stammered and grunted. Holland snuffled. Burke twisted his spindle legs. Forrest 'chewed the cud,' like an ox. Charlotte Cushman had a masculine figure, a gaunt face, and a broken and quavering voice. These things have little or nothing to do with the essential question. The art of acting is a complex art, made up of many arts. It is not an actor's business always to be graceful in his attitudes and movements, or always to be regular and polished in his periods and enunciation. Every artist has a way of his own, by which he reaches his results. Mr. Irving's way is not the best way for everybody, because the only true, right, and conclusive way of universal nature; but, undoubtedly, it is the best way for him. He produces marvellously fine effects by it, and therefore he is right in using it. Within a certain field, and up to a certain point, it is invincible and triumphant. As far as he now stands disclosed upon this stage Mr. Irving is a thorough and often a magnificent artist, one who makes even his defects help him, and one who leaves nothing to blind and whirling chance; and if the light that shines through his work be not the light of genius, by what name shall it be called?"

The performance of Mathias, Charles, Louis, and Shylock,

gave the same critic an opportunity for a thoughtful article on Irving's acting in these characters, in which the method of the player was subjected to analytical, but temperate and kindly criticism. The writer could not agree with all that the actor did, but he realised that a great actor was bound to interpret the various characters according to his own individuality. "Mr. Irving," he said in conclusion, "is an actor who has distinct reasons for his methods of art. No thoughtful observer will deny that his Shylock is consistent, harmonious, and natural; and it has impressed many judges as superlatively fine. It will be remembered for attributes distinctly intellectual: whereas his Mathias and Louis XI. must live in memory as works of imagination, executed with strong and fluent emotion and consummate skill, while his Charles is an ideal of majesty, and has the mellow colour and sombre richness of an old historic painting." With the end of the New York engagement, Mr. Winter was able to make a further digest of the art of the actor and to point out his influence in the theatre. "It has been a time of earnest, resolute, ambitious, adequate effort upon the stage, and of quick appreciation and enthusiasm in front of it. The Irving engagement marks an epoch in the history of the American theatre. The prosperity of the dramatic art receives from it an extraordinary impetus, and it will be attended with consequences far-reaching and valuable, both on the stage and in the public mind". He had much to say in favour of the completeness of the company and of the harmonious nature of the various stage pictures which had been presented. He thought that one of the chief reasons for Irving's triumph was his "glowing enthusiasm" for his art—an enthusiasm which, strong as it was in 1883, was equally strong throughout his life.

Mr. Winter also dwelt upon two other reasons which always contributed to Irving's popularity—his abiding personal charm and the pervading naturalness of his method. Nor did America's foremost dramatic critic—the warm, personal friend of Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett—hesitate to apply

the word "genius" to the English actor. He only stated a truth which many people felt who had no acquaintance with Irving when he remarked that "in any situation of life the personality of this actor would give the impression of something strange, exceptional, and, in various ways, attractive. In other words," he continued, "he is a man of genius; and, on whatsoever line of thought he might manifest in his powers, their manifestation would inevitably be attended with originality and allurement. He has impersonated here nine different men—each one distinct from all the others. That is a practical exercise of the art of acting. Yet in doing this he has not ceased to exert one and the same personal charm—the charm of genialised intellect. The soul that is within the man has suffused his art and made it victorious. The same forms of expression, lacking this spirit, would have lacked the triumph. All of them, indeed, are not equally fine. Mr. Irving's Mathias and Louis XI., are higher performances than his Shylock and Doricourt—higher in imaginative tone and in adequacy of feeling and treatment. But throughout all these forms, the drift of his spirit, setting boldly away from conventions and formalities, has been manifested with delightful results. He has always seemed to be alive with the specific vitality of the person represented. He has never seemed to be a wooden puppet of the stage, bound in by formality and straining after a vague scholastic ideal of technical correctness. This is the naturalness of his method, and this is perfect mechanism—if it be not carried too far. With his ideals—with what was seen to be passing in his mind—it has not been possible in any instance much to disagree. His limitations are found in the physical mediums of expression, and in the realm of what may, perhaps, be suggested, if not described, as the overwhelming ecstacy or frenzy of the passions. He belongs to the traditions of Kemble and Macready, rather than to those of Garrick and Edmund Kean. Yet he is distinct from both of his artistic ancestors, and in some ways he has gone beyond them. In that field which may be called weird,

picturesque, romantic, in the slow vivisection of piteous human misery, his figure stands apart from all others—lonely and alone."

For the last night of the first season in New York—Saturday, 24th November—there was one of those composite programmes which Irving loved to present on such occasions. It consisted of the first act of "Richard III.," "The Belle's Stratagem" (in two acts), and "The Dream of Eugene Aram". Before the recital of Hood's poem, Irving addressed a few simple and eloquent words to an audience which filled every part of the Star Theatre. "Ladies and Gentlemen," he said, "I should be unjust to myself if I were to allow this moment to pass without at least endeavouring to express my gratitude for your great kindness to my comrades and myself. When I stood here for the first time, about a month ago, I ventured to express the hope (encouraged by your generous applause) that 'our loves might increase even as our days do grow'. You, upon your part, have fulfilled our highest anticipations. I also bespoke your consideration for my sister artist, Miss Ellen Terry, saying that she would win your hearts; and I believe I am not wrong, to-night, in thinking that she has done so. We all regret that our stay with you is not longer—that it is not months instead of weeks. But I am not here to bid you farewell. I will only say *au revoir*. We expect to appear before you again next April, when we shall present 'Much Ado' and 'Hamlet'. These plays were received with favour in our old home beyond the sea, and we trust they will be received with equal kindness in what I venture to call our new home on this side of the Atlantic. I can do but little to express, on behalf of my associates and in my own behalf, the gratitude that we feel toward the public of New York. Could I say more I should feel less. We have been happy in your society and we leave you with natural regret."

The twenty-nine performances in New York were accorded that "free, frank, and impartial criticism" for which the *Standard* had implored, and the "American theatre-

goers" as well as the "American theatrical critics" had, so far, seized the opportunity of applauding the actor with enthusiasm which knew no bounds. The receipts for the four weeks, although not so great as on some other occasions in America, were considerable. And, better still, they were progressive, as will be seen from the following details: first week, $15,772; second week, $18,714; third week, $18,880; fourth week, $22,321—total, $75,687, or £15,600 sterling. Moreover, the public paid much more than this huge sum, for there had been a large "deal" on the part of the ticket speculators, it being computed that, as the $2½ (10s.) seats had been sold for $10 each, the public had paid $150,000 to see Henry Irving during his first season in New York. In this way, as well as by the press, the *Standard* was answered. Again, on the day that he finished his first New York engagement, the box-office was opened in Boston for his season there beginning two weeks later; and, within the first few hours, $7,000 were subscribed.

Henry Irving played eight characters during the four weeks in New York. These were: Mathias, Charles, Louis XI., Shylock, Lesurques, Dubosc, Doricourt, and Gloucester—Miss Ellen Terry acted Queen Henrietta Maria, Portia, the small part of Jeanette in "The Lyons Mail," and Letitia Hardy. In addition to acting every night and at matinées, Irving had the supervision of the productions and the thousand and one details of management. He was the recipient of much hospitality, and banquets, either lunches or suppers, were frequent. These social functions imposed an extra strain upon him, and, at that time, he enjoyed such festivities, prompted as they were by good feeling. One of his best personal friends in New York was the late E. A. Buck, the proprietor of the *Spirit of the Times*—an intellectual companion who extended the greatest hospitality to Irving. The theatrical critic of his paper was—and is—Stephen Fiske, one of the best-informed writers on the drama, English and American, in the United States. He put the case for Henry Irving very clearly before his readers by recounting the

salient features of the actor's career up to the autumn of 1883. "These simple facts prove," he continued, "that, aside from his acting, with which it is not our duty to deal at present, Mr. Irving is one of the most remarkable men of this or any other age. But he is unquestionably right when he asserts that he owes his success to his acting alone. It has been said that the splendid manner in which he puts his plays upon the stage is the secret of his popularity; but he first became popular in plays which were not splendidly mounted, and his greatest financial and artistic successes have been made in pieces upon which he expended no unusual decorations. It has been said that Manager Bateman made Irving, but, as we shall presently prove, Irving made Manager Bateman in London, and has been doubly successful since Manager Bateman's death. It has been said that his leading lady, Ellen Terry, is the Mascot of Irving's career, but his fame was established before Miss Terry joined his company. It has been said that the financial backing of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts gave Irving his opportunity; but he had been overcrowding the London Lyceum for years before he made the acquaintance of the Baroness.[1] No; the unprecedented and unrivalled success of Mr. Irving has been made by himself alone. He became popular as an actor in a stock company; his popularity transformed him into a star and a manager; and, as a star and a manager, he has widened, deepened, and improved his popularity. He has won his position fairly, by his own talents and exertions, against overwhelming odds, and he has nobody to thank for it but himself, in spite of the theories which we have exploded."

Mr. Fiske's admirable appreciation appeared only a few

[1] This unfounded statement was finally disposed of shortly after Irving's death and in the lifetime of the Baroness. Writing from No. 1 Stratton Street on 25th October, 1905, Mr. W. Burdett-Coutts, M.P.—the husband of the Baroness—said: "The Baroness Burdett-Coutts never gave or lent money to Sir Henry Irving; never provided him with it in any form; and never, at any time, had any pecuniary transaction with him. Nor did he ever ask her to do anything of the kind." Irving never had any financial help from individuals or syndicates.

days before the opening night at the Star Theatre, and another compliment of the first visit to America was the following poetical greeting from William Winter :—

WELCOME.

I.

If we could win from Shakespeare's river
The music of its murmuring flow,
With all the wild-bird notes that quiver
Where Avon's scarlet meadows glow;
If with our joy could blend, at meeting,
The love that lately grieved to part,
Ah, then, indeed, our song of greeting
Might find an echo in his heart.

II.

But since we cannot, in our singing,
That gladness and that love entwine,
At least we'll set our blue-bells ringing,
And he shall hear our whispering pine:
And these shall breathe a welcome royal,
In accents tender, sweet, and kind,
From lips as fond and hearts as loyal
As any that he left behind.

CHAPTER III.

November, 1883—April, 1884.

Boston—Philadelphia—"Hamlet" produced—A musical serenade—A presentation — Social entertainments and celebrities — Chicago conquered—Enthusiasm of the press—"Much Ado About Nothing" produced—A great reception—Speech of thanks—Other cities—Washington, Irving meets President Arthur—Reappearance in New York—"Much Ado" runs for three weeks there—Irving's valedictory speech—A triumphal result—Farewell banquets — The return to England—Mr. Winter's poem of Farewell.

On the following Monday, 26th November, Irving opened in Philadelphia, at the Chestnut Street Opera House, in "Louis XI." From the first moment that he appeared on the stage until the end, he held his audience captive. His Shylock, also, made a profound impression, although some of the critics were not in accordance with his view of the character. But his great triumph in Philadelphia was as Hamlet, which he there acted for the first time in America. Edwin Booth was well remembered and greatly liked in that part, and Irving had to overcome the remembrance and the liking. But he kept his audience enthralled, and the papers were very just to him. "Mr. Irving presented a Hamlet last evening that was entirely consistent with itself and with the play, and the most virile, picturesque, and lovable Hamlet that has ever been seen on the stage," said the *Ledger*. "There was great variety in his moods and manners. He realised Goethe's idea of a born prince—gentle, thoughtful, and of most moral nature, without the strength of nerve to make a hero. There was, indeed, the fullest variety given to the part; it was dramatically interesting, and a clearly marked, intelligent study that more than realised the expectations that have been formed of the personation." Again, "in

the play scene," said another newspaper, "he justified by the greatness of his acting almost all that has been said or could be said in praise of it. So grandly and impressively did he bring the scene to a close as to call down thunders of applause from an audience that he had thrilled and swayed by a power undeniably great."

He received some special compliments of a personal nature while in Philadelphia, the most curious of which occurred on Thanksgiving Day. He was aroused from his slumbers by the playing of "God Save the Queen". The strains of the familiar tune came from the *Evening Call* band and flute and drum corps—eighty-six performers in all—beneath his bedroom window. It was a graceful idea, and, as Irving was an early riser, he enjoyed the unexpected incident. He sent the following tribute to the editor of the paper which had organised this unexpected testimonial to his position :—

"My Dear Sir,—Upon this day of universal thankfulness, allow me to add a personal item—my thanks to you and your magnificent band for the honour done to me this morning by the serenade. I enjoyed the music much, and beg to add my tribute of praise to the worth of your band which, to my mind, is among the best I have heard. To hear the strains of the national anthem of my own dear land here, and on such a day, touched me much, and assures me again in a forcible manner of the strength of the affection between the two countries, England and America.

"Believe me to be, dear sir,

"Yours very faithfully,

"Henry Irving."

On 7th December, he was the guest of honour at a breakfast given to him by the Clover Club, at which he met, among other noted men of the place, Charles Godfrey Leland (Hans Breitmann), and was presented by Mr. Thomas Donaldson, a member of the club, with the watch that had belonged to Edwin Forrest. In accepting the gift, he said : "This recalls so many memories that you will pardon me if I am not able

to express my deep gratitude for this mark of affection. I say affection, for to receive here such a memento of your great country is more than I could have dreamt of. To think that to-day, before so many distinguished Americans, a watch could be given to me that belonged to Edwin Forrest! It recalls a most unfortunate affair; I refer to the contretemps between Forrest and my countryman, Macready. That such a tribute should have been offered me shows how changed is your feeling towards art; shows how cosmopolitan art is in all its phases." The function lasted until after five o'clock, and, on rising to leave, Irving said: "The welcome you have given me has surpassed my most ideal dream. I cannot describe my feelings. Such generosity, such welcome, such friendship as I have met with here, no act of mine can repay."

At the conclusion of Irving's visit to Philadelphia, one of the local journals published a curious specimen of "comment" on the engagement: "Enlisted as enthusiastic champions on his side is a goodly array of ox-eyed literary daisies, whose nauseating pollen is flung far and wide, stifling the public judgment, even as Dalmatian powder chokes a cockroach. Very few of these encephalitic growths, however, project their looming mass upon the horizon of Philadelphia, and Mr. Irving has been generally judged and approved in this city with due regard to his merits and demerits as well."

Having captured the playgoers of New York and Philadelphia, Irving proceeded to Boston, in which city he made his first appearance, as Louis XI., on 10th December. The magnificent Boston Theatre—then the largest house in the Eastern states of America—was filled with an audience of so rare a kind that the papers went into minute description of the spectators. "The audience was not made up of average theatre-goers," said one journal, which noted the unaccustomed fact that although many regular first-nighters were present, a very large majority of the spectators was composed of "people of wealth, who go to the theatre comparatively little". Another unusual sight was duly recorded by another paper: "Most of the gentlemen who attended were accompanied by ladies,

and the house, as seen from the stage, presented a very brilliant appearance". But better still, "Louis XI." was a source of great admiration, and "The Merchant of Venice," "The Lyons Mail," "Charles the First," "The Bells," "The Belle's Stratagem," and "Hamlet"—which were all presented during the two weeks' engagement—were enthusiastically received. The social entertainments offered to Irving were numerous, the most interesting of those which he accepted being a dinner at the Somerset Club, given by Mr. Charles Fairchild and Mr. James R. Osgood. On this occasion he met Mr. W. D. Howells, Mr. Laurence Hutton, Mr. S. L. Clemens (Mark Twain), Thomas Bailey Aldrich, the veteran actor, William Warren, and other distinguished persons. During his Boston engagement, he also met Oliver Wendell Holmes, who witnessed Irving's performance of "Charles the First" and was much impressed by his pathetic acting. "The Bells" and "The Belle's Stratagem" were given on the second Saturday night. In bidding farewell after this entertainment, Irving reminded the audience that in coming to America he had often said that he felt that he was coming among friends. "I have had abundant and touching proof that I was right," he continued; "this I have never felt more truly than in your historic city of New England, which seems a veritable bit of Old England. In this theatre we have been on classic ground, and, if we have, while upon these boards, accomplished anything tending, in your opinion, to the advancement of a great art, in which we are all deeply interested, we are more than repaid and more than content."

The story of unqualified artistic and social success in the East was repeated in the West. As in Philadelphia and Boston, "Louis XI." was the first play presented in Chicago where, on 7th January, Irving began a fortnight's engagement after a long and trying journey from Brooklyn. Despite the severe climatic conditions—such intense cold had not been experienced for thirteen years—Haverley's Theatre was crowded, and the utmost enthusiasm was manifested by the audience throughout the evening. Repeated calls were made

at the end of each act in which Irving appeared, the applause at the conclusion of the fourth and fifth being particularly emphatic. The verdict of the papers next day was equally gratifying, and, as the judgment of Chicago had—and has—great weight in Western America, the result of the remainder of the tour became a foregone conclusion. "He is great," wrote the Chicago *Tribune*, "let that be said of Henry Irving, for it is the impression that his acting made last night. After seeing him for the first time, one no longer wonders how Irving, like Lekain in France and Garrick in England, has opened a new era in a noble art." The Chicago *Herald*, after a careful analysis of his impersonation of the decrepit Louis, affirmed that after such touches of art as it had enumerated, "his auditors understood why England acknowledged him king among actors. In the matter of recalls, the audience voiced their enthusiasm unmistakably. Again and again they demanded his appearance in order to testify to the sincerity of their appreciation of Irving's triumph." The Chicago *Daily News* was equally enthusiastic: "The sudden transitions of voice, the alterations of manner and the dreadful realism of the last act, mark him without a peer in the part he has chosen. Descriptive criticism fails to do justice to the originality of the man." The two other morning papers were equally eulogistic. "The Merchant of Venice," "The Bells," "The Belle's Stratagem" and "The Lyons Mail," in addition to "Louis XI.," made up the programme for these two weeks in Chicago.

A return visit, beginning on 11th February, introduced the Hamlet of Henry Irving and the Ophelia of Miss Ellen Terry to Chicago. The daily papers devoted column after column to criticisms of the performance, and Irving had no reason for complaint on the score of appreciation. "There is no disputing the fact," said the Chicago *Daily News*, "that Henry Irving's Hamlet made a very deep impression upon the large and thoughtful audience present at Haverley's last night. Among all those actors who have appeared in the character upon the American stage during the past fifteen

or twenty years, no one has so entirely changed the accepted acted version of the play as has Mr. Irving. His cuttings and additions to the text and his reading are done with such a scholarship and such an elocutionary intelligence as to throw a flood of light and meaning upon this well-worn character. He in this rôle alone shows that he has the innovating quality of genius, the desire for originality, which, as Poe tells us, must be sought long and earnestly. And so by the aid of this quality, even in Hamlet, which has been studied and turned inside out by generation after generation of actors, Mr. Irving has found something new which is also something true. To enumerate all the interesting features of his own acting would take longer than time permits. The play scene aroused the enthusiasm of the audience to a very high pitch. The princely dignity of the character, the love for Ophelia, the tenderness to his mother, the comedy and the sadness of the character, were beautifully brought out." This, however, was mild to the recognition of the Chicago *Tribune:* "The performance was the culminating triumph of the brilliant series of plays brought out by Mr. Irving in this city. The enthusiasm of the vast audience at times broke into cheers. It was expected that Henry Irving would give a superb impersonation of Hamlet. The actor's keen and penetrating intelligence, his sensibility, so true and delicate though never superabundant, and above all, his poetic temperament, which flings a halo of charm over every work which he interprets—these high qualifications fitted him to essay that character, so subtle that it is almost an ideal which men look upon without hope of realisation. . . . The interpretation given last night was the most subtle, the most harmonious, and the most highly poetic that the present generation can hope to see upon the stage. Mr. Irving gave the character the rare and beautiful touch of high-bred courtesy. At no moment did Hamlet cease to be the Prince and the gentleman. In the play scene the Prince throws himself at Ophelia's feet, flings his gibes right and left, and the tension of his nerves is seen in the tightly drawn features, in the fiercely-suspicious eye,

in the twistings of the body. For one instant, when he sees Ophelia in tears, he presses his face against the floor, lying at full length, giving vent to one heart-throb of grief. The next moment he is all attention, more highly-strung to his purpose than before, more feverishly impatient for the climax. It comes with thrilling swiftness, and Hamlet's frenzy bears it upward on soaring wings of passion. His face is livid with the demoniac madness of satisfied suspicion, of revenge, of hate; he drags himself from Ophelia's feet, and, writhing towards the King in a triumph of delirium, confronts the murderer of his father. He staggers to his feet as King and courtiers scatter in horrified amazement, he grasps the throne convulsively and sinks down, still laughing and gasping in mad and reckless joy. Then comes the reaction. This scene is one of magnificent emotional power and of matchless dramatic conception." The concluding part of this admirable article was prophetic: "A Shakespearean performance like that of last night, so complete in detail, so superb in acting, and so rich in poetic effects, surely deserves a most generous acknowledgment. If words of admiration may seem rhapsodical that are spoken to-day of Mr. Irving's taste as an artist and genius as an actor, they will be little beside the tribute of the future, when his name shall have become a great memory."

Space forbids the quotation of any more excerpts from the Chicago press on Irving as Hamlet, nor can there be anything more than a brief reference to Irving's first production in the United States of "Much Ado About Nothing". "The theatre was crowded, and the complete success of the performance was unmistakable. The merits of the performance are numerous enough to place it high above anything ever seen here. Mr. Irving possesses a strong interest—we may say fascination—for the spectator," wrote the Chicago *Daily News*. "Where could be found one who could embody more perfectly the essence of the poet's creation," asked the Chicago *Tribune*, "who could so elaborate and intensify the ideal which shines from the ancient and illumined page?

From the statue by E. Onslow Ford, R.A.

IRVING AS HAMLET.

Perhaps the most delicious scene in the comedy was that in the garden when Benedick is caught in Cupid's net. The quizzical and sceptical expression fades from his face. He is thoroughly mystified for a moment, but reflection tells him that Beatrice really loves him, and he grasps at the conclusion as if he were glad of the discovery. He seems to convey the impression that he had loved Beatrice from the first, although he had never admitted it to himself. This is intensifying the author's meaning in a most natural manner, and it is one of the best illustrations we have of Mr. Irving's artistic intuition. His Benedick was a true, poetic and lofty interpretation; it was the light sketch of the poet richly coloured and completed. . . . Seldom in this city has so great a popular demonstration been so well deserved. In the characters of Benedick and Hamlet, England's greatest actor has touched both poles of Shakespeare's universal genius, interpreting the poetry of joyous sunshine and the poetry of starless night."

The same paper drew attention, on another occasion, to the probable result of Irving's first visit to the United States: "American managers will draw several lessons from the success of the Irving engagement. One is that Shakespearean plays must not be mutilated to give prominence to one actor. Artistic harmony must not be sacrificed to personal ambition. Another lesson is that an actor must not undertake all alone to act a play; he must have a company of actors, not a company of incompetent amateurs. A third is that Shakespearean plays are the jewels of dramatic literature, and their setting should surely be as rich as that given to the extravagant productions that are doing so much to vitiate popular taste." On the last night in Chicago, Irving recited "The Dream of Eugene Aram," in addition to playing Benedick. At the conclusion of the comedy, there were loud calls for a speech, and, in response, he thanked his new-found friends in Chicago for their hearty welcome: "Not one shadow has fallen across the brightness of that welcome; the efforts of the company have not been marred by a single jarring

note. The encouragement has been most grateful, and it has urged myself and my associates to do our best work. I thank the press of this city for overlooking our shortcomings and for recognising so generously what they have found to be good—the notices have been most eloquent and sympathetic." Then came the recital of Hood's poem, more applause, further recalls. The verdict of New York had been amply endorsed by that of Chicago.

After Chicago, Detroit was visited for two nights, the Wednesday of that week being devoted to a holiday at Niagara, and on Thursday, 21st February, Irving made his first appearance in Canada—at Toronto. In Boston, on the 25th, an enormous audience welcomed Henry Irving and Miss Terry on their return to that city in a remarkable double bill—"Louis XI." and "The Belle's Stratagem". "Much Ado About Nothing" was also played during these six nights, to the delight of Boston. During the week's engagement in Washington, beginning on 3rd March, Irving met President Arthur and was entertained by him at the White House. Then came one of the hardest weeks of the whole tour, five towns being visited—New Haven, Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, and Providence. "The Bells" and "Louis XI." were represented. Apart from the acting and rehearsals, there was the fatigue of travelling, not to mention the incessant hospitality—the Springfield Club extended a bounteous welcome to the actor, and Mark Twain entertained him at Hartford. During this arduous week, Miss Ellen Terry enjoyed a much-needed rest in Washington. Return visits to Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and New York followed the trip to New England.

Irving chose "Much Ado About Nothing" for his reappearance in New York, and the wisdom of his choice was shown in the circumstance that—beginning on Monday, 31st March, the play was represented for three weeks, and to magnificent receipts. The artistic success of the performance was recognised from the first. "The excitement of that cheerful October evening, last year, when Henry Irving made his first appearance in New York, was repeated last night,

at the Star Theatre, where 'Much Ado About Nothing' was presented, and where Mr. Irving and Miss Terry effected their re-entrance, and were welcomed by a brilliant company, with the heartiest admiration and goodwill. The scene, indeed, was one of unusual brightness and enjoyment, both before the curtain and upon the stage. The applause upon the entrance of Beatrice—a rare vision of imperial beauty!—broke forth impetuously and continued long; and upon the subsequent entrance of Benedick, it rose into a storm of gladness and welcome."

THE FIRST AMERICAN TOUR.

29th October, 1883—26th April, 1884.

29th Oct. to 24th Nov.	New York	Four weeks
26th Nov. to 8th Dec.	Philadelphia	Two weeks
10th to 22nd Dec.	Boston	Two weeks
24th to 29th Dec.	Baltimore	One week
31st Dec. to 5th Jan.	Brooklyn	One week
7th to 19th Jan.	Chicago	Two weeks
21st to 26th Jan.	St. Louis	One week
28th Jan. to 2nd Feb.	Cincinnati	One week
4th to 9th Feb.	Colombus and Indianapolis	One week
11th to 16th Feb.	Chicago	One week
18th to 23rd Feb.	Detroit and Toronto	One week
25th Feb. to 1st March	Boston	One week
3rd to 8th March	Washington	One week
10th to 15th March	New England cities	One week
17th to 22nd March	Philadelphia	One week
24th to 29th March	Brooklyn	One week
31st March to 26th April	New York	Four weeks

Plays.

"The Bells," "Charles the First," "Louis XI.," "The Merchant of Venice," "The Lyons Mail," "The Belle's Stratagem," "Hamlet," and "Much Ado About Nothing".

So recorded the New York *Tribune*. But the *Sun* was even more emphatic: "Mr. Irving and his company furnished a dramatic representation more complete, artistic, and in every way admirable than any that has been seen upon our stage". This was praise indeed. The New York press eulogised the performance and gave the most appreciative recognition of the general effectiveness of the representation. On Saturday, 26th April, the first tour of America came to an end. The programme for that evening was calculated to display the versatility of the chief players, for it comprised acts from "The Merchant of Venice," "Louis XI.,"

"Charles the First," and "Much Ado About Nothing". "Mr. Irving," said the critic of the *Tribune*, in chronicling this event, "endured a severe strain—for he was required to impersonate, in conditions of a climacteric character, the successive natures of Shylock, Louis XI., Charles I., and Benedick; to reach these conditions without preparatory gradations of advance, and to give the characters all their vitality in an instant. His readiness and versatility astonished even those who are best acquainted with the resources of his mind." In considering the effect of Irving's acting as he had witnessed it up to the end of the first tour of the New World, Mr. Winter pointed out that "the purpose of the stage is not merely to amuse a crowd of people for two or three hours, or to show how much more clever one man is than another in a special line of expression, but to display scenes and powers that tell of what human nature is composed and of what it is capable, and so to suggest how sacred our duty is to rule and guide it upon eternal principles of right. So far as anything of this sort can be defined, with reference to the serious design and the latent, inexorable morality that dwell in all things, this view defines the drift of the stage. A true actor knows this and treats his art in this spirit. This is what Mr. Irving has done and this is the reason of his success. Back of the actor is the lofty, calm, resolute, far-seeing, and noble mind. Real achievement exists by right and not by sufferance. Such a man never can fail in the commanding purpose of his life. Honour goes before him and affection remains behind. Fortunate for the world as for the actor that this should be so. The history of the dramatic art presents many examples, pitiable and pathetic, of men with faculties of a high order who have spent long years of toil in intellectual pursuits, but whose efforts have passed without recognition and without reward. Thrice happy he to whom nature has vouchsafed the investiture of genius, so that his labour becomes glorified in all eyes, with mysterious radiance of divinity!"

Irving's farewell speech on the closing night of the first of his eight visits to America was as follows: "Ladies and

Gentlemen,—It is my privilege to thank you for all your goodness towards us. I wish my tongue possessed an eloquence that would adequately express my thoughts. On a night that will ever be remembered by us, six months ago, you welcomed us to these boards, and I thank you as the representative audience of the empire city of the United States for the welcome which we have everywhere received from the American people. Not one jarring note, one ungenerous sentiment, has marred the happiness of our stay among you. Arab-like we closed our tents and travelled to many places, and travelling in America is unlike travelling in England: the distances are greater and the cities are further apart. Some one has kindly suggested that to oblige us they might perhaps be pushed a little together; but we can certainly, after visiting your country, sympathise with the American gentleman who was afraid of venturing forth from his hotel in London lest he should fall into the sea. But wherever we have been we have received a gracious and generous hospitality, and the last four weeks have shown us that New York has in no way forgotten the first kind greeting she gave us. Of the efforts which have helped to gain your favour it does not become me to speak at length, but, thanking you on behalf of each and all, I cannot refrain from expressing my pride in the triumph of one who has made an impression on your hearts which will never be effaced. I mean my sister artist, Miss Ellen Terry. She has won

One of the Caricatures of 1883.

'golden opinions from all sorts of people,' her heart is full of gratitude, and by her fireside she will often tell of the kindness she received from the American people. For myself, I have a host of delightful memories. You have shown that upon the broad platform of a noble art the two greatest sections of the English-speaking race are one nation. You have shown that no jealous love of your own most admirable actors has prevented you from recognising the earnest purpose of an English company, and we shall return to our homes with the conviction that, new as our methods may have been, you have set the stamp of undisguised approval upon them, and your generosity is, I am sure, heartily appreciated by the English people. Certainly as long as I have a theatre the doors of the Lyceum will be open to welcome your distinguished countrymen. One is acting there now; others will be there by-and-by; and that we may not be quite forgotten, we are returning soon ourselves; and that we may not be forgotten by you, we are returning to you soon. 'Dick,' said your great Abraham Lincoln to Governor Oglesby, 'Dick, keep close to the people.' And that the American people may not forget us, we are coming, if all be well, in the next autumn. We shall return full of hope and anticipation, and to our friends at home we shall say that we are returning for a parting embrace—a six months' embrace—and I am sure that our dear land, which has the first place in our hearts, will not begrudge us the affection which we bear to America, which out of the depths of your kindness you have conjured up. Ladies and gentlemen, I respectfully, gratefully, and, if I may say it, lovingly, wish you good-by."[1]

Among the social functions which took place in New York prior to the departure of Henry Irving, was a breakfast given in his honour at Delmonico's on 14th April, to which allusion has been made already in connection with the

[1] The receipts for the tour amounted to $405,634 or £83,808 14s. 7d. and were $15,000 in excess of a famous tour of the same duration made in America by Sarah Bernhardt. In the early part of this year, Irving was elected to the Reform Club (London).

host—Edwin Booth. On the 25th, Irving, by way of returning some of the hospitality which had been so freely lavished upon him, gave a breakfast, also at Delmonico's, to some hundred personal friends. The Lyceum company, in charge of Mr. Stoker, left New York on 27th April, on the *City of Chester;* Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and Mr. Loveday departed on 30th April, on the *Aurania.*[1]

As Mr. Winter had welcomed Henry Irving in verse upon his arrival, so now he published a poem—which he first read, at the breakfast at Delmonico's, on 25th April—of

FAREWELL.

Far off beyond the shining sea,
Where scarlet poppies glisten
And daisies on the emerald lea
Lift up their heads and listen,
Where Thames and Avon glance and glow,
To-day the waters, straying,
Will murmur in their tranquil flow
The words that we are saying.

Ah, not in parting hours alone
Are those sweet accents spoken;
Farewell, that sobs in sorrow's moan,
May smile in welcome's token.
Farewell, farewell, our hearts will sigh,
When void and dark his place is,
But, oh, fare well is England's cry,
To him her love embraces.

Farewell, thou child of many a prayer,
Thou pride of her that bore thee!
All crystal be the seas that bear
And skies that sparkle o'er thee!
Thy mother's heart, thy mother's lip
Will soon again caress thee—
We can but watch thy lessening ship
And softly say, God bless thee!

[1] Henry Irving and Miss Terry took part in an entertainment given during the voyage on behalf of the Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Asylum, by which the handsome sum of £130 was realised. They recited some scenes from "The Cup".

But let the golden waves leap up,
While yet our hearts beat near him!
No bitter drop be in the cup
With which our hope would cheer him!
Pour the red roses at his feet!
Wave laurel boughs above him!
And if we part or if we meet
Be glad and proud to love him!

His life has made this iron age
More grand and fair in story;
Illum'ed our Shakespeare's sacred page
With new and deathless glory;
Refreshed the love of noble fame
In hearts all sadly faring;
And lit anew the dying flame
Of genius and of daring.

Long may his radiant summer smile
Where Albion's rose is dreaming,
And over art's hesperian isle
His royal banner streaming;
And every trumpet-blast that rolls
From Britain's lips to hail him,
Be echoed in our kindred souls,
Whose truth can never fail him.

On your white wings, ye angel years,
Through roseate sunshine springing,
Waft fortune from all happier spheres,
With garlands and with singing!
Make strong that tender heart and true—
That thought of heaven to guide him—
And blessings pour, like diamond dew,
On her that walks beside him!

And when is said the last farewell,
So solemn and so certain,
And Fate shall strike the prompter's bell,
To drop the final curtain,
Be his, whom every muse hath blest,
That best of earthly closes—
To sink to rest on England's breast
And sleep beneath her roses.

CHAPTER IV.

May, 1884—April, 1885.

The *Times* on Irving's success in America—Irving takes the chair in aid of a theatrical charity—The Lyceum re-opened—An enthusiastic welcome—Irving's speech—The 243rd representation of "Much Ado" at the Lyceum—"Twelfth Night" revived—A managerial mistake—Irving's Malvolio—Illness of Miss Ellen Terry—Various revivals—Farewell speech—Irving arranges a record tour of America—Letter from him—First appearance in Canada—Hard travelling—The third visit to New York—Malvolio and Hamlet well received—Plays Shylock for a benefit and sees himself caricatured—"The Lyceum Christmas Play"—Farewell to New York—Lectures at Harvard—A great compliment—Some notable speeches.

THE good work accomplished by Henry Irving in America was not lost upon lovers of the drama in London, and the newspapers of the period admitted its value. "Mr. Irving," said the *Times*, "has vindicated for his vocation a definite position among the serious arts. He has been accepted in the United States with distinguished honour in virtue of his championship of the right and duty of the dramatic art to be a fine art. The remarkable success he has achieved is a gratifying sign of the willingness of public opinion in America to co-operate with that of England to rescue the stage from the lower level to which it has sometimes sunk". This testimonial to one of the chief results of his aims was a form of recognition which was peculiarly gratifying to him.

Henry Irving made his first public appearance in England on his return from America, on behalf of his poorer brethren and sisters of the stage. On Thursday evening, 29th May, he presided, at the Freemasons' Tavern, over the thirty-ninth anniversary festival of the Royal General Theatrical Fund, when he took the chair for the third time in connection with the Fund. As usual, on such occasions, he was eloquent in his

plea, and he took the opportunity to indulge in a little pleasant sarcasm. The taste for the drama was more widely diffused, he said, playgoers had multiplied, actors had a greater share of popularity and better salaries than were known a generation ago. It had long ceased to be a maxim, even in fastidious circles, that going on the stage was the last phase of social deterioration. Acting was more generally recognised as a fine art than it ever was before, and they no longer troubled themselves to answer those who asserted that the stage was inconsistent with culture. It had been recently stated that, while it was true that gentlemen of education were eager to enter the dramatic profession, gentlewomen were not numbered among their recruits. They had been told that the prejudice of parents and guardians against the stage as a vocation was as strong as ever, and that actresses were not, even to a limited extent, drawn from the well-bred and the well-educated classes. Speaking from his own knowledge, nothing could be more erroneous. There was a perfect multitude of gentlewomen eager to enter the profession, and, as a rule, debarred by only one disadvantage—inability to act. The enthusiasm for the actor's calling had never reached a higher pitch, and he could find no more striking illustration of that than the great change in the tone which actors themselves adopted in speaking of their own profession. Whenever he read their speeches of many years ago he was struck by the depression, by the apparent consciousness that the drama appealed to but a small section of the community, and that the stage was altogether in a bad way. That was not their present tone. Nobody spoke of the theatre with bated breath. They stood erect and confident in the good opinion of their fellow-citizens, sure that their art had received its worthiest award from the highest intelligence of the time. But, like every other profession, they had their poor always with them. Good fortune could not brighten the lives of all, and too many of the deserving fell out of the ranks. To all who had stumbled or fallen in the manful struggle for success, it was their duty and their pleasure to hold out a helping hand. Replying to the

toast of "The Chairman," which was proposed by his faithful friend, Toole, he said that the recollection of his visit to the States was dimmed by only one regret. Shortly before sailing for England he received a proposal, made in perfect good faith, by an eminent firm of circus and menagerie proprietors to form what they called an unexampled combination, by giving Shakespearean performances in their mammoth canvas tent on a stage which could be seen at every point by 20,000 people, who between the acts were to refresh themselves with the graceful gambols of the elephants and the stately deportment of the ringtailed monkey. That was a grand opportunity which, he was sorry to say, he wantonly sacrificed. "Ladies and gentlemen," he concluded, "I were but little happy if I could say how much, and I would I could express to you and all my friends what a stimulus your unflagging support has been to our courage and our ambition to do honour to the art I am proud to serve." Subscriptions were announced amounting to £900, including an annual donation of 100 guineas from the Queen, 50 guineas from the chairman, and 20 guineas each from Miss Ellen Terry and J. L. Toole.

On Saturday, 31st May, the Lyceum was re-opened[1] with "Much Ado About Nothing". It is needless to say that the reception of Miss Ellen Terry when "in her rich russet-red robe and coquettish little ruff," she descended lightly from the steps of Leonato's palace was only equalled by the deep murmur of pleasure, the prolonged outburst of cheering, the great waving of handkerchiefs, which awaited the Benedick of the hour when he stepped upon the stage. It was noticed that the fatigues of nights in American playhouses and many days and nights on American railways had left some traces on his features, but he played the part of the predestined husband of "dear Lady Disdain" with more than his former

[1] During the absence of Henry Irving, his theatre had been occupied by two of America's most popular players—Miss Mary Anderson and Lawrence Barrett. Miss Anderson acted, from 1st September, 1883, to 5th April, 1884, in "Ingomar," "Pygmalion and Galatea," and "Comedy and Tragedy". On 12th April, the American tragedian began his season in "Yorick's Love," an adaptation from the Spanish, by W. D. Howells.

spirit and gaiety. At the close of the performance, the mass of the spectators retained their seats, evidently in expectation of a speech. Nor were they disappointed; for the actor-manager, having led Miss Terry from the stage, whereon both artists had just bowed their acknowledgment of the long-continued applause, returned and addressed the audience thus: "Ladies and Gentlemen,—You will believe me when I tell you that it is an inexpressible delight to find ourselves amongst you once again. What can I say to you—how on behalf of myself and my comrades can I thank you for the greeting which you have given us? Without presumption we may believe that you are glad to see us back. (Cries of 'We are'.) It seems a long time—a time not measured by weeks or months—since we bade you 'Good-bye'. Since then we have travelled far, and the hopes which I ventured to express concerning our reception in America have been realised to our hearts' content. We have made troops of friends, and we have returned grateful for the magnificent welcome which the great people of America gave us, but not, I hope, forgetful of the dear friends we left at home. Pray, ladies and gentlemen, do not think the less of what I say, because we shall soon be leaving you again; for, if all be well, we hope by-and-by to settle down contentedly in what you will allow me to call the bosom of our family. But to-night we are meeting and not parting, and I will not dwell upon that theme. No doubt you have heard many odd things about us, all sorts of reports concerning our projects for the future, and among others, the building of a palatial structure on the Thames Embankment. Ladies and gentlemen, I have no such ambition; I shall endeavour to remain here as long as my respected landlord will permit me; and I shall do all in my power to tempt you to come within these walls. It will be my hope and my ambition to present to you in the future a succession of plays sometimes described as ancient and modern, and I am sure you will be interested to hear that in America, as in England, the ancient plays have had the best of it, for Shakespeare invariably brought us the largest measure of

success. In fact, the prejudice up to the present has, I believe, been in favour of Shakespeare, and therefore you will not wonder when I tell you that it is my intention, during our present brief season, to present to you the ancient comedy of 'Twelfth Night'. I need not make a secret of who the Viola will be, and you must have been rejoiced to see to-night that after captivating all who beheld her across the Atlantic, we have brought back to you my lady Beatrice—in the best of health and spirits. We have sometimes been reproached for the long run of plays, that consummation so devoutly wished by the managers of theatres in general. This may have been the misfortune of the management of this theatre, but certainly it has not been its fault, but 'Twelfth Night' must be an exception, for its run will of necessity be short. But short as it must be, I wished to prove to you that to retain your favour we do not depend wholly upon what we have done—but that the present and the future are ever brightly in our thoughts. May I express my delight at the splendid reception you have given to our American friends, Miss Mary Anderson and Mr. Lawrence Barrett—(renewed cheering). As their successes have been won in this theatre, you will pardon my saying that I feel a personal pride that you have so graciously done the honours of my house. And now, ladies and gentlemen, I will again say how glad we are to be amongst you once more, and I hope that our own return will afford heart-stirring proof that our absence has not diminished your regard for us, or lessened the sense of obligation and duty which we owe to you." When the general audience had departed, the stage was crowded with many of the late occupants of stalls and dress-circle, including men of eminence in all walks of life, who were eager to congratulate the actor upon the complete success of his visit to America.

"Much Ado About Nothing" was played until 5th July, on which date the two hundred and forty-third representation of the comedy at the Lyceum took place. As events turned out, it would have been better, for several reasons, had Irving relied upon the re-production of some of the other plays in

his extensive repertory than to revive, at the end of the season, another Shakespearean piece. He had, however, announced his intention in regard to "Twelfth Night"; acccordingly, on Tuesday, 8th July, that comedy was revived. The performance did not appeal either to the first-night audience, or, indeed, to the public in general. Despite the presence in the cast of many admirable actors, the representation did not succeed in London, and when the curtain fell on the first performance, a most unusual scene was witnessed—one, indeed, which has no equal in the career of Henry Irving. The event has been magnified and distorted, but the truth of the matter is that a small group of discontented occupants of the pit, annoyed, no doubt, by the injudicious applause from the stalls, gave unmistakable evidence of their displeasure. After the curtain had fallen on the last act, there were the usual calls for a speech. As soon, however, as the actor-manager began to comply with the demand, he was interrupted by some of the audience in the pit and the gallery. Nettled, perhaps, by this unseemly demonstration, he committed what was, no doubt, an error of judgment. Had he smiled, and retired with that grace of which he was such a master, all would have been well. But—and his courage is worthy of admiration—he faced the malcontents and calmly pointed out some potent facts. He had been away from England for some time, and was not accustomed to the altered attitude of first-night audiences, and he felt that there was "a strange element," the existence of which he did not understand, in the house. He said that he was perplexed and puzzled at the possibility of any opposition in the face of what had been done and what had been seen. These remarks provoked some cries of discontent which were instantly smothered in a storm of applause, whereupon he uttered some words which have become familiar in theatrical annals: "I cannot understand," he said, "how a company of earnest comedians and admirable actors, having the three cardinal virtues of actors, being sober, clean, and perfect, and having exercised their abilities on one of the most difficult of Shakespeare's plays, can have given

you cause for dissatisfaction". He alluded to the fact that he had produced six plays by Shakespeare, and he hoped that the sixteenth would "go and be acted nearly as well as this". The speech was well received and it restored the good humour of the evening. Still it was a mistake, for it gave the cavillers an opportunity for abuse and it indicated to the public at large that all had not gone well.

Irving's Malvolio was a disappointment, even to his most

TWELFTH NIGHT: OR, WHAT YOU WILL.

Revived at the Lyceum, 8th July, 1884.

Malvolio	Mr. Henry Irving.
The Duke Orsino	Mr. Terriss.
Sir Toby Belch	Mr. David Fisher.
Sir Andrew Aguecheek	Mr. Francis Wyatt.
Fabian	Mr. Andrews.
Clown	Mr. S. Calhaem.
Sebastian	Mr. Fred Terry.
Antonio	Mr. H. Howe.
A Sea Captain	Mr. Tyars.
Valentine	Mr. Haviland.
Curio	Mr. Mellish.
A Friar	Mr. Harbury.
1st Officer	Mr. Archer.
2nd Officer	Mr. Harwood.
Olivia	Miss Rose Leclercq.
Maria	Miss L. Payne.
Viola	Miss Ellen Terry.

Scene. A City in Illyria and the Sea-coast near it. Act I., Scene 1. The Sea-coast; Scene 2. The Courtyard of Olivia's House; Scene 3. Orsino's Palace. Act II., Scene 1. Terrace of Olivia's House; Scene 2. Road near the same; Scene 3. Olivia's House—the Hall. Act III., Scene 1. Orsino's Palace; Scene 2. Another part of the Sea-coast; Scene 3. Olivia's Garden. Act IV., Scene 1. The Market Place; Scene 2. Courtyard of Olivia's House. Scene 3. Olivia's Garden; Scene 4. The Orchard End; Scene 5. Olivia's House—the Dark Room. Act V., Scene 1. Olivia's House—the Cloisters; Scene 2. Before Olivia's House.

ardent admirers—his own character was too strong for the part. He could not subdue his own nature sufficiently. It is impossible to agree with the verdict of Joseph Knight that "Mr. Irving may probably claim to be the best Malvolio the stage has seen". The actor created overmuch sympathy for the ill-used steward. He moved his audience to tears rather than laughter, and thus turned comedy into tragedy. In the later scenes, especially, he was profoundly tragic, and Malvolio's

line, at the end of the play, "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you," was delivered with "the concentrated hate and ungovernable vehemence of a Shylock". Malvolio is a character which, to be successful on the stage, can only be acted on conventional lines. Irving was entirely unconventional, decidedly original—and as a result, the performance was not to the general liking. The Viola of Miss Ellen Terry was a combination of gentle pathos and delicate humour—one of her most gracious and winning impersonations. On the other hand, the company was a remarkable instance of square pegs in round holes. Most of them were out-of-place, and the Olivia of the occasion was so indistinct on the first night that, at several important parts of the play, she could not be heard. Again, beautiful as was the scenery, it was just a little too elaborate for so simple and so poetical a play; and there was justice in the complaint that more attention should have been paid to the songs of Shakespeare, an important element of "Twelfth Night". The music was specially composed by Arthur Sullivan, but there was not enough of it to please the public taste.

Misfortunes, according to an old adage, never come singly. After the first few nights of the revival, illness compelled Miss Ellen Terry to retire from the cast, and her sister, Miss Marion Terry, took up her part and acted it until the end of the revival. This enforced change did not tend to success, for, admirable actress as Miss Marion Terry has always been, she was not in the position occupied by her sister as a great popular attraction. The thirty-ninth and last performance of "Twelfth Night" took place on Friday, 22nd August. On the Saturday and Monday evenings, "The Bells," was given, "Louis XI." being represented on the Tuesday and Wednesday. "Richelieu" was acted on the last night, Thursday, 28th August. During the season, Miss Winifred Emery re-joined the company, and played Annette in "The Bells," Marie in "Louis XI.," and Julie in "Richelieu". Mr. George Alexander also returned to the Lyceum as De Mauprat in Lytton's play, he having been engaged in place of William

Terriss, who had transferred his services to Miss Mary Anderson.

After the performance of "Richelieu," on 28th August, Henry Irving, still attired in the robes of the old Cardinal, made, in excellent taste and with evident feeling, a brief speech of farewell. Having alluded to his forthcoming tour of Canada and the United States, he announced his intention of permanently settling down "at home" upon his return and of pursuing the course which he had hitherto pursued in regard to the production of Shakespeare's plays. "Our past season," he continued, "has been dimmed by but one cloud—the protracted illness of Miss Ellen Terry. That cloud has now happily passed over, for, after great pain and suffering—borne with exceeding patience—she is nearly restored to health, to her many friends, and to the stage which she so adorns. And now, ladies and gentlemen, for each and all of us, I have again to thank you, and whatever reports during our absence may reach you—and some wondrous fables are pretty sure to assail your ears—I hope you will remember that, wherever we may be, we carry with us an imperishable memory of the unswerving kindness which we have always received at your hands, and which we hope it will be our good fortune to enjoy for many bright years to come." Three weeks later—that is to say, on 18th September—Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and the Lyceum company left Liverpool by the *Parisian* for their second tour of America.

This second American tour was arranged by Henry Irving himself, and was so planned that the long journeys, which had been such a severe strain during the first visit, were avoided. He did not mind railway travelling on his own account—generally speaking, he rather liked it—but he had to think of others, particularly of the lady members of his company. The route, of course, was only a detail, though a highly important one. His main object was to make firm his hold upon American audiences and to derive as much benefit as possible from the favourable impression which had been created already. His views were fully expressed in a long letter which he wrote

to his friend and confidential secretary, L. F. Austin. It was written in the train on the journey from Boston to Washington on Sunday, 2nd March, 1884:—

"The seed we have sown, I mean to reap—our work has been a revelation and our success beyond all precedent." In reference to some personal matters, he says: "Thereby hangs a tale, not worth telling now. But the end is—our triumph has been complete, and the country captured. Our return visit to Boston, which is just over, was, I believe, the biggest engagement ever played in their large and beautiful theatre—seven performances realised $24,089—£4800.

"Our return tour will exceed this present one—I am certain. And I shall be my own manager and have no middleman. The only trouble we have had has been in travel and we have gone backwards and forwards in the most irritating manner—20 and 30 odd hours often in the cars. This will be avoided in the future—for I have made a consecutive and easy tour.

"The work has been heavy, and what with rehearsals, acting, journeys, interviews, and speeches—I have had little spare time.

"Our return here will, I should think, silence the carpers. Nothing could so prove our success and satisfaction with our venture. It has been a brave fight and bravely won.

"'Hamlet' has been as enthusiastically received as in England. The man can *act*, and the public thinks so.

"Nothing but snow since we left New York"—(three months before the date of this letter)—"the heaviest winter they have had for 20 years". The letter gives the dates for the end of that—the first—tour, and concludes: "Then hey for the broad Atlantic and the merry shores of Old England".

In accordance with the plans which he had made at the time of writing the above letter, Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and the Lyceum company appeared in Quebec, on Tuesday, 30th September. Never had Quebec seen so great a performance of "The Merchant of Venice," and the newspapers on the following day were lavish in their eulogy. Two

dailies, one in Montreal and the other in Quebec, the latter printed in French, led the way in praise. The representation, which took place in the Academy of Music, was given under considerable difficulties. The bare appearance of the building itself and its state of dirt was not a happy augury for the English visitors. As for the stage, it was so small and unfitted for the purpose, that it was impossible to use the Lyceum production, and makeshift scenes had to be hurriedly improvised. But, thanks to the costumes and draperies, all went well, and the expectation which had been aroused by a local paper—"Cette unique représentation sera un événement dont les dilettanti, nombreuz chez nous, ne voudront certes pas manques l'occasion"—was not disappointed. Immediately after the performance in Quebec, the journey to Montreal—some eight hours—was made. Five performances were given there—four evening ones and a matinée, beginning with "Louis XI." On Thursday, "Much Ado About Nothing" was played. "Hamlet" was acted on the Friday, "The Merchant of Venice" on the Saturday afternoon, and "The Bells" at night—remarkably heavy work, when it is remembered that the performances were given with all the completeness for which Irving was famous. The skill and labour of changing the bill so frequently, and of packing and repacking the scenery and costumes, were enormous. Added to this, the heat was intense in Montreal, yet many people stood closely wedged in rows in an almost immovable mass at the performances. After "The Bells" on the Saturday night, Irving made a good-humoured little speech in which he thanked the young collegians in the gallery for their melodious aid in beguiling the tedium of the waits, and expressed the hope that at some time he might be able to offer them engagements, a genial compliment which elicited much hearty laughter. Thanks to the advanced prices, the five performances in Montreal drew $11,000, so that the first week of the tour started most auspiciously.

Miss Ellen Terry was still suffering from the effects of her illness, and she was spared as much fatigue as possible. Con-

sequently, she remained behind at Montreal, when the company left on the Saturday night for its journey of four hundred and seventy miles to London, Ontario. It was just as well that the leading lady of the company did not attempt this journey, for it was particularly trying. Its discomforts were humourously described by a member of the company who, writing home at the time, said: "At one o'clock on Sunday morning we were all at the station ready for departure; but it was half-past four ere the baggage was in its place, and the train was on its way. Habit reconciles one to many things, and I daresay travelling in a Pullman car for eighteen hours may become too commonplace for mention, but I cannot at present say that it conforms to my idea of comfort. We broke the journey at Toronto for about half an hour, and then we were nearly four hours on the road to London, though the distance is only seventy-six miles. Certainly, a special train has its advantages in this country; but celerity is not one of them. To-morrow morning we start for Hamilton, thirty-four miles away, and, by a special grace, it is hoped that we may arrive there within two hours. On Wednesday, the 8th inst., a four nights' engagement begins at Toronto, to be followed by three nights at Buffalo, one night at Syracuse, and then three weeks—three blessed weeks—at Boston, which will be a perfect haven of rest. We shall be some eight hours in the train between Buffalo and Syracuse, and twelve hours or more between Syracuse and Boston, so the commiseration of all who do not like protracted travelling by railway is really our due."

At London and Hamilton, Irving gave his masterly impersonation of Louis XI. Miss Terry rejoined the company on the Wednesday evening at Toronto where "The Merchant of Venice" was the opening piece of the five performances in that city. The same répertoire was given as in Montreal, "Hamlet" drawing the largest audience. The two weeks thus spent in Canada were most profitable in every respect, and at Buffalo, where Irving appeared on 13th October, he had a great house and a great reception. The United States were then in the ferment of a general election, but political

distractions did not prevent the huge audiences from showing appreciation for the English actor. A Buffalo critic asserted that the advent of Henry Irving and Miss Terry had sounded the knell of "gibbery-gosh," a term which was supposed to describe the customary dramatic pabulum of his native city. In Boston, the election frenzy was at its full height, but large audiences and appreciative comments in the press were the rule. "Twelfth Night" was presented, for the first time on the tour, on 3rd November, and was received most favourably. In London, Irving's Malvolio was considered too tragic, but the majority of the Boston critics were of opinion that it combined the requisite degree of seriousness with very delicate comedy, although one of them boldly asserted that it was a "deliberate burlesque". The cast was, on the whole, a great improvement upon the London one. Miss Winifred Emery, for instance, won much commendation for her impersonation of Olivia, while the late Mr. Wenman as Sir Toby Belch, Mr. Norman Forbes as Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and Mr. S. Johnson as the Clown were highly praised. The small part of the Duke Orsino was entrusted to Mr. George Alexander, who, however, had more chance for distinction as Nemours in "Louis XI." and as Bassanio. His rendering of the latter character was pronounced "highly intelligent, refined, and sympathetic," and his reading of Antonio's letter was noted as "a fine illustration of simple and manly emotion".

During Irving's third visit to New York, he presented, on 18th November, "Twelfth Night," and on 26th November, "Hamlet," for the first time in that city. His Malvolio was well received and he triumphed with the public in "Hamlet" although he had to run the gauntlet of comparison with Edwin Booth in the character. "The formalism of Malvolio," said Mr. Winter, "his scrupulous cleanliness, his precise demeanour, his constitutional habit of routine, his inordinate self-complacency—over which, nevertheless, his judgment keeps a kind of watch—his sensitiveness of self-love, his condition of being real in all that he feels and suffers—these attributes

Mr. Irving combined into a distinct and rounded personality, of which the humour is—as it should be—wholly unconscious. His sustained preservation of the identity was especially impressive, and he was most characteristic in his dry, distinctly articulated, unconsciously pompous delivery of the text." The same critic did not agree with Irving in his conception of Hamlet nor in his rendering of some parts of the character. But, in the course of a long, analytical article, he freely admitted many of the beauties of the interpretation : "There are parts of Hamlet to which Mr. Irving's temperament and method are exactly fitted. No actor was ever truer or finer than he in denotement of the blending of assumed madness with involuntary derangement—the forlorn state of a wild, unsettled mind, protecting itself by simulated wildness. No actor ever better expressed the bitterness and sarcasm of a sweet nature, outraged, shocked, and turned back upon itself. In the play scene, in the ensuing colloquy with the two spaniel courtiers, as in the first talk with them, and in the last ghost scene, Mr. Irving's Hamlet is at its best; and its best is exceedingly beautiful. . . . A man who acts greatly is, doubtless, a great actor, without reference to what it is that his acting is specifically designed to exhibit; but the man who acts a great part, like Hamlet, so as to put us into possession of it, has accomplished more, and risen to a higher intellectual station than is possible even to the most perfect executant. This is Mr. Irving's victory—and it is a brilliant one; unequivocal; permanent; not to be denied; and safe beyond reach of disparagement."

Artistically and financially, the third visit to New York left nothing to be desired. Despite the political agitation, the public never wavered in its allegiance to the English actor. On a single day, when "Hamlet" was represented in the afternoon and "Louis XI." at night—the receipts reached the satisfactory total of £1300 sterling. Among the minor incidents of these four weeks, it may be mentioned that Irving acted in the trial scene from "The Merchant of Venice" for the benefit of the Actors' Fund of America and, immediately after-

wards, saw himself caricatured as Shylock upon the stage which he had just left. He witnessed this piece of bad taste from the box in which he sat chatting with Mr. Grover Cleveland, the President-elect of the United States. An hour or two later, the other candidate for the suffrages of the American people, Mr. Blaine, saw "Twelfth Night" at the Star Theatre, and went behind the scenes in order to congratulate the impersonator of Malvolio. Great hospitality was, it is hardly necessary to record, extended to the actor, notably by the members of the Lotos and Press clubs. One of the most satisfactory features of Irving's visit at this time was found in the declaration of the eminent lawyer and orator, Mr. Chauncey Depew, that Henry Irving had done more than any Englishman in recent years to cement the good feeling between England and America. Another charming tribute from an American was the presentation to the actor by Mr. G. W. Childs, the proprietor of the Philadelphia *Ledger*, of a wine-glass which had belonged to Washington.

Christmas week was passed in Pittsburg—the Sheffield of the United States, and by no means an inspiriting city, save to the hard man of business, at the best of times. But, thanks to the kindly thought of Henry Irving, his company had, on Christmas Eve, a most enjoyable and memorable evening. One and all, to the number of seventy-five, including the wives of several members who, although not acting, travelled with the company, sat down to the most sumptuous repast which Pittsburg could afford. No fault was to be found with the dinner, but the coloured waiters, unused to the deliberate nature of the Englishman when consuming his Christmas fare, whisked away the food with premature haste. Still, the good cheer was plentiful, and there was, in addition, an entertainment of a kind that was absolutely unique. "The Lyceum Christmas Play" was performed for this occasion only. It was the prelude to the presentation to Miss Ellen Terry of "a little souvenir from the Gentlemen of the Lyceum Company". "The Lyceum Christmas Play, for this occasion only," was one of the most brilliant compositions ever written by L. F.

Austin, who accompanied his chief on this tour. It began with the introduction of the stage-manager, Mr. H. J. Loveday, and brought on, in turn, all the chief male members of the company, including the musical conductor, Mr. Meredith Ball, and Mr. Bram Stoker. The author of the skit also appeared, and a young actress, Miss Katie Barry, spoke the final verses and made the presentation to Miss Terry. Yet this was not all. The giver of the feast, untiring in his endeavour to please his guests, went to the trouble of learning a long poem—entitled "Yes or No?" and written by Mr. Hal Louther, one of his company—and recited it on this eventful Christmas Eve. This was one of the many kindly and unostentatious acts with which his life was filled; beyond the gratification derived by the author at hearing his poem spoken by Irving and the pleasure of the family party—there were no strangers present—there was nothing to be gained.

Five performances—including one on Christmas Day—were given in the smoky city and to splendid receipts. In Chicago, on 14th January, Irving played "Eugene Aram" for the first time in America, and, in the same city, on 20th January, he acted "Richelieu" for the first time in the United States. By the end of the next month, the tremendous work of the campaign had affected his energy somewhat, and he was compelled to remain out of the bill for three evenings in Boston. He returned to his labours on the last night of his engagement in that city and played "Louis XI." to an enormous audience. Then came the farewell visit to New York. It began on 9th March with "Eugene Aram" and ended on 4th April with "Charles the First". The closing performances at the Star Theatre attracted thousands of spectators who were forced to pay inflated prices for their seats. The ticket speculator was then rampant in New York, and although the theatrical manager did not participate in this nefarious mode of exacting money, great numbers of people gladly paid as much as $10 and $15 a seat. "Hamlet," "Louis XI.," and "The Merchant of Venice," filled the theatre to its utmost capacity. On the last Saturday afternoon,

Irving played "Louis XI." to one of the most enthusiastic audiences ever gathered together. After his impersonation of "Charles the First," in the evening, the applause was deafening, and oft-repeated. Irving had already stated[1] that it was his intention to remain in his own country in the future, and his farewell speech in New York only emphasised this determination. He was emphatic in his declaration that his duty to his theatre in London and to the public at home would not permit any more professional visits to the United States. Consequently, the parting from the New York audience on 4th April, 1885, had all the sincerity and feeling of a final separation, although the actor alluded to the closeness of the intercourse between England and America, and of the troops of American friends who visited London each season and before whom he should never play without the consciousness that he was addressing his kinsmen. His speech was followed by a remarkable demonstration of enthusiasm. Henry Irving and Miss Terry were recalled many times, the orchestra alternated "Hail Columbia" with "Auld Lang Syne," and, after more recalls, the vast audience dispersed, slowly and reluctantly. It was a most remarkable exhibition of genuine feeling, and a tribute to the good will of the people, of which Irving was justly proud. "So ends the most astonishing professional progress any actor has ever made through this country." Thus wrote one of the foremost journalists of America on the following morning. The statement was one about which there could be no controversy. During the first half of Irving's visit, the country was absorbed in a political contest of the greatest moment; moreover, a serious depression in trade had proved disastrous to many other theatrical enterprises during the same period. Yet Irving, supported by the most complete dramatic organisation ever seen in

[1] "We shall once again have the pleasure of appearing before you, next March, and then, as actors, we must take a last and long farewell. On this subject I shall not dwell—sufficient to the day is the pain thereof." —Henry Irving, in his speech at the close of his third engagement in New York, 6th December, 1884.

America[1] visited the great cities, charged high prices, and won a measure of support that was without precedent.

Apart from the interest shown in his performances, he received two very high compliments during this visit to New York. On Monday, 30th March, he gave, in the Sanders Memorial Theatre of Harvard University, an address entitled "The Art of Acting". He was the first actor to receive academic honours in the chief centre of American learning. As in Edinburgh in 1881, he chose for his subject the art to which he had devoted his life and to which, even then, he had rendered such inestimable service. Nor did he pitch his discourse in too apologetic a strain. Had there been any necessity to apologise for the stage, the foremost of English actors would not have been invited to Harvard merely in order to sit in sackcloth and ashes. Nor did the professors of the University take it amiss when he plainly stated his intention to give to any students, who might be disposed at some time to become actors, the advantages of a counsel gathered from a wide experience. The students listened to his exposition of the requirements and practice of his art with profound interest. If any of them ever went on the stage, and failed to attain distinction, they could not honestly complain that his lights misled them. "It is true," he said, "that there must always be grades in the theatre, that an educated man who is an indifferent actor can never expect to reach the front rank. If he do no more than figure in the army at Bosworth Field, or look imposing in a doorway; if if he never play any but the smallest parts; if in these respects he be no better than men who could not pass an examination

[1] "Never until Henry Irving arose did Booth meet with a rival. He had eclipsed Forrest. He had nothing to fear from either Davenport, Brooke, Murdoch, Adams, Dillon, Marshall, Wallock, Fechter, Lawrence Barrett, or John McCullough. He stood alone in the public favour, and for many years he had the realm of the tragic drama entirely at his command. He was assailed, indeed, but he was never shaken. Not till Henry Irving came to America did Booth ever have reason to understand that his star had passed its meridian and was beginning to descend."—*Life and Art of Edwin Booth*, by William Winter.

in any branch of knowledge, he has no more reason to complain than the highly-educated man who longs to write poetry, and possesses every qualification save the poetic faculty." He addressed some other wholesome warnings to young actors; indeed, anything less like an over-coloured picture of the dramatic calling, or a rhetorical appeal calculated to stimulate the vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself, could not be imagined. At the same time, there was a distinct assertion of the claim of the art of acting to demand "the honourable exercise of some of the best faculties of the human mind". What Henry Irving has himself done, and what has been achieved by other notable actors to sustain this theory was

SECOND AMERICAN TOUR.

30th Sept., 1884—24th April, 1885.

30th Sept. to 4th Oct.	Quebec, Montreal	Five nights
6th to 11th Oct.	London, Hamilton, Toronto	One week
13th to 18th Oct.	Buffalo, Syracuse	One week
20th Oct. to 8th Nov.	Boston	Three weeks
10th Nov. to 6th Dec.	New York	Four weeks
8th to 20th Dec.	Philadelphia	Two weeks
22nd to 27th Dec.	Pittsburg	One week
29th Dec. to 3rd Jan.	Cleveland, Detroit	One week
5th to 31st Jan.	Chicago	Four weeks
2nd to 7th Feb.	Washington	One week
9th to 14th Feb.	Philadelphia	One week
16th to 28th Feb.	Boston	Two weeks
2nd to 7th March	Brooklyn	One week
9th March to 4th April	New York	Four weeks

perhaps even more convincing to his audience, than his eloquence. As they listened to this earnest man who stood at a reading-desk on the stage of a model theatre, "the only actor in our play," picturesque and graceful, even without the glamour of theatrical lights and costumes and scenery, they recalled the many vivid impressions they had received from Hamlet, Shylock, and Louis; they were revisited in memory by the grace and sweetness of Ophelia, Portia, Viola, and Beatrice; and they saw again the varied pictures of Venice and Messina and Illyria, all the colour and movement which had made some of the most perfect illusions of their lives.

When the idea of giving a public banquet to the actor before his departure from America was mooted, there was no

difficulty in obtaining the support of eminent men. Over a hundred names were attached to the invitation, including those of Senator Evarts, Senator Bayard, Henry Ward Beecher, G. W. Curtis, Oliver Wendell Holmes, W. D. Howells, T. B. Aldrich, Goldwin Smith, Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, John McCullough, Mark Twain, Horace Howard Furness, Chauncey Depew, J. N. Osgood, and C. Dudley Warner. The form of the invitation to the banquet was very noteworthy :—

"NEW YORK, 14*th March*, 1885.

"HENRY IRVING, ESQ.,

"SIR,—We, the undersigned, representing a large number of your friends, desire to testify the esteem in which you are held by the American people, for your high personal qualities, the admiration you have excited artistically as an actor, and the respect which you have won as an earnest reformer of the stage, by tendering you a public banquet at Delmonico's, on Monday, 6th April, if that date will suit your convenience.

"Our citizens will be glad in this way to express their appreciation of the intellectual pleasure and instruction which they have derived, not only from your personal performances as the greatest of English actors, but from your admirable system of management, which has resulted in the most satisfactory dramatic representations, in every detail, that have been witnessed in this country.

"While awaiting your reply to this invitation, we hope that your resolution to make your present engagement here a final farewell may be reconsidered, and that, from year to year, a portion of your theatrical season may be reserved for this country, where your welcome will always be hearty and sincere.

"We remain, sir, yours sincerely," etc.

Such a testimony, backed by such a consensus of opinion, is one of the highest tributes ever paid to an actor. It was no formal and conventional feeling, no forced etiquette, fashion

and ceremony, which induced such a body of men to lend all the weight of their character to make this judgment historic. The following is the text of Irving's acceptance of this invitation :—

"GENTLEMEN,

"The great honour which you propose to confer upon me, I accept with pride and pleasure.

"Such a distinction, offered by so remarkable a body of American citizens, far exceeds my deserts. This proof of good-will must always be most precious, and my only regret is that I cannot, at some time, return to your stage.

"Of the welcome you so graciously promise I feel assured, but I am compelled to forego it by my paramount duties at home.

"As an Englishman, I thank you for your brotherhood; and, as an actor, I thank you on behalf of my profession.

"I beg to remain, gentlemen,

"Your very faithful Servant,

"HENRY IRVING."

The banquet admirably illustrated the spontaneous spirit of the whole movement. Ex-President Arthur was to have presided, but he was kept away by illness, and his place was perfectly filled by Senator Evarts, a gentleman who in features was more an antique Roman than an American, and when the guest of the evening said, "I am no orator as Brutus is," the allusion was exceptionally happy. Mr. Evarts had a reputation for making very able, but very long speeches, consisting of interminable sentences, yet his speech at this dinner was a model of brevity and epigram. "When again he came amongst us," he said of Irving, "he came as a friend to friends, and has been here ever since as a friend among friends; and while he has been here in this little world of our country, all the world has been a stage, and every man and woman in it a playgoer to see him play." But nothing in the Senator's speech made a greater impression than his description of the community of sentiment between England and America.

"It is in this widespread and universal transfusion of thoughts, of ideas, feelings, and affections, that nothing is provincial any more, nothing central; but all English people everywhere surround the world with their speech, their laws, their literature, and their admiration, and wherever a man speaks English to English hearers, he is, and speaks, at home." Henry Irving touched upon the same idea with the playful remark that, in spite of the constant exchange of small shot in the shape of jest and epigram between England and America, whenever an alien attacked English institutions, Americans were "pretty prompt to wipe the floor with him"—one of the most expressive of the idioms which are racy of American soil. One of the points in Irving's speech was his humorous contrast between the compliment paid to him and the "testimonial" which, according to the old statute law of England, an actor was liable to receive in the shape of a public whipping. "That was what might be called the benefit performance of the period." To the sentiment of gratitude for all the kindness which he had received from America, Irving gave emphatic utterance. "I express Ellen Terry's feelings as well as my own when I tell you that we shall sail from your shores to-morrow morning with hearts full of grateful affection for the American people, and with the conviction that the honours you have heaped upon us will be a precious heritage to those who are nearest and dearest to us. I have no better wish than that you should say of me what Rufus Choate said of great Americans: 'Dearly he loved you, for he was grateful for the open arms with which you welcomed the stranger and sent him onwards and upwards'." This sentiment, delivered with much feeling, was received with the greatest enthusiasm.

Then came Heny Ward Beecher. His good sense, his wit, his command of simple, forcible English, and the ease and spontaneity with which he rose to eloquence, were characteristics which gave him a perfect command of his audience. His tribute was brief and admirable: "One real man in a generation is worth forty thousand orations about manhood. One thoroughly good picture is worth all the gabble of annual

Miss Ellen Terry. The Captain. —— —— L. F. Austin. Mr. H. J. Loveday.
Henry Irving. Gordon Craig. Mrs. Loveday and Son.

S.S. "Arizona" Homeward Bound, 1885.

addresses about art. One thoroughly good representation of the mimic art by a real company sets the argument for histrionic art further along than all the talk in the world." The function of the actor, he said, was to make the sculptured marble of dramatic literature live and move. Towards Henry Irving, he had the feeling which came to him in autumn when the birds were gone, and he did not know whether he should ever hear their song again. This touching sentiment closed a speech which was one of the most impressive tributes to dramatic art ever spoken or written. It gave that kind of satisfaction which Mr. William Winter expressed in the poetical address to Henry Irving, which was a striking incident of the evening :—

> If not the torrid diamond wave that made young life sublime,
> If not the tropic rose that bloomed in every track of time,
> If not exultant passion's joy when all the world was fair,
> At least one flash of heaven, one breath of art's immortal air !

The evening of 6th April, 1885, was always memorable to the recipient of so much honour. No expression of enthusiastic admiration and friendly regard for a public man could have been more perfectly designed. There was nothing laboured, nothing tedious ; when the last word was spoken and the charm was dissolved, the visitor wondered at the lapse of time. And this was true of the whole of Irving's second tour in America—so much had been done in so short a space, so many cities had been visited, such distances traversed, such a multitude of minds filled with delightful memories.

A few hours after this extraordinary testimony to his position, Henry Irving and Miss Terry, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Loveday and by Mr. Austin, sailed from New York by the *Arizona*. The company, in charge of Mr. Stoker, left two days later—9th April—by the *City of Chicago*.

CHAPTER V.

May, 1885—December, 1885.

"Hamlet" revived—Irving introduces the booking of pit and gallery—The idea in advance of the times—It is abandoned—Cost of the experiment—Irving's views on the subject—Irving's acting never deteriorates—His Hamlet and Shylock praised—"Olivia" revived—Dr. Primrose a great success—Improvements in the theatre—The production of "Faust"—Royalty present—Some accidents—A great triumph—"Faust" begins its triumphal career.

THE return to the Lyceum was made particularly interesting on account of Irving's attempt to institute a reform which has since been adopted in London—the booking of the seats in the pit and gallery. But this thoughtful and well-intentioned effort on behalf of a large section of playgoers was promptly rejected. Even the press did not view the scheme with favour. A special booking-office in the passage leading from the Strand to the pit was open from eight in the morning until six in the evening. Seats were reserved, one week in advance, "by personal application only". It was not encouraging to find the innovation received with coldness and conjectures made as to its failure. The prophets of evil, who were ever attendant on Irving's success, ever watching for the slightest loophole for the expression of their discontent, were right in this particular instance. "We fear the so-called popular innovation of Mr. Irving at the Lyceum," croaked one of them, "the privilege of booking seats in advance to the pit and gallery, will not find much favour with the crowd. The question will, no doubt, be asked by the great actor on Saturday night, and we prophecy a storm of negatives." In order to carry out his new idea, Henry Irving did not spare any expense. The pit and gallery were reseated throughout in a most luxurious

fashion, thereby curtailing the paying space, and adding materially to the cost of labour and attendance. The plan was met in no unbecoming spirit by the adherents of the pit. But it was found that the crush which had previously taken place on the afternoon of a first night was transferred to the early hours of the morning, and it was argued that a crush at five o'clock in the afternoon was preferable to one at the same hour in the morning. There was much speculation on the first night as to the result of the "new pit". The occupants of the reserved pit and gallery took their comfortable places in good time, and, during the performance of "Hamlet"—with which, on 2nd May, the Lyceum re-opened[1]—there was not the slightest sign of discontent. The actor-manager was greeted with a loud and long-continued roar of welcome, and at the end with demands for a speech. The rest of the story may be told in the words of the *Daily Telegraph:* "Mr. Irving proceeded to speak only with momentary interruptions of good-humoured encouragement. No one could believe that there were two opinions on the pit question. In his well-known cheery fashion, Mr. Irving expressed his gratification of being home again; he once more repeated the inevitable compliments to America and American audiences for what they had done in the way of welcome to himself and his company; he told us what most people knew, that 'Olivia' was shortly to be revived; and then very delicately he approached the question of the new pit. At once out burst a storm. It had been pent up and restrained under extreme tension, but now down it came. There was evidently anything but a unanimous opinion on Mr. Irving's reform of convenience. The partisans of the 'new pit' cheered the smiling manager to the echo; the

[1] During the absence in America of Henry Irving, the Lyceum was again occupied—from 1st November, 1884, to 25th April, 1885—by Miss Mary Anderson, who revived "Romeo and Juliet," with much splendour, on the former date, Mr. Terriss being the Romeo and Mrs. Stirling the Nurse. On 9th April, Miss Anderson appeared as Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," to the Claude Melnotte of Mr. Terriss. "Pygmalion and Galatea," and "Comedy and Tragedy," were played on the last night of Miss Anderson's season.

doughty supporters of the 'old pit' yelled their companions down. No one could say whether the 'ayes' or the 'noes' had it. Mr. Irving did not risk the experiment of calling for a show of hands. Three hearty cheers were given for the new pit; three cheers as hearty were given for the old. Mr. Irving, as calm as a judge, merely smiled, and protested again and again, in excellent temper, that what had been done was done with the laudable motive of assisting the public good, and that it should be all undone directly the public voice voted for the abolition of booking. This fair offer, however, did not allay the storm. Some spokesmen, for one cause or another, strove to address the manager, but they were shouted down or cheered into silence. At last Mr. Irving bethought him of a Shakespearean sentence to cause peace. A happier thought has seldom occurred to a manager in a dilemma. It was exactly the right quotation to make, and it redounds to Mr. Irving's credit and tact that it was made. 'So, gentlemen,' said Hamlet transformed into manager, 'with all my love I do commend me to you; and what so poor a man as Hamlet is may do, to express his love and friending to you, God willing, shall not lack!' To such a graceful and courteous utterance as that there could be but one reply—the heartiest round of cheers that the whole evening afforded. Mr. Irving retired the evident winner in the encounter, and the great pit question was left to be decided by time. If the booked pit works well it will surely be retained; if it is unpopular it will as surely be abolished. Meanwhile the discussion was creditable alike to manager and public." But the "noes," had it, and very quickly too. In little more than a week—on 12th May—the advertisements contained the following:—

"*Special Notice:* Mr. Irving begs respectfully to announce that in accordance with a generally expressed wish on the part of the public, he has determined to restore, from Monday next, 18th May, the Lyceum pit and gallery to their old form."

A few months later, the pit question became prominent in connection with the advocacy of the queue system for London

—a system, by the way, that has since superseded the old days of fighting for admission—and Irving, interviewed on the subject, stated that his experience in endeavouring to reserve the pit and gallery had cost him £3000. "'From more than one point of view,' he said, 'I was not sorry that it failed. Had it been successful it would have made a small revolution in the theatrical world, as even during the six weeks that the pit seats were bookable we found that the dress circle and stalls people had begun to avail themselves of the privilege of a booked seat at a cheap rate. I believe that ladies drove up in their broughams to the pit doors. Under the present system, they would go to the higher-priced seats. Then, from an artistic point of view, the booked pit did not applaud, and the applause of the pit is most inspiring, for, as I have said before, the pit is the backbone of the theatre. Well, so much for my attempted reform. You urge upon me what you are pleased to call the orgies at my pit door, and the obstruction which the waiting crowd causes to the street traffic, and you ask me whether I should be willing to adopt the 'tail' system. Certainly, but you cannot form a tail without space. I have naturally thought much about these things, but even if the Lord Chamberlain were to inaugurate compulsory queues, how could we do it? Why, the line might sometimes wind down to the Embankment, and only the police could enforce it. The queue is undoubtedly the best for the manager, as he can get more people into the pit.' 'But if the system works in Paris, why not in London?' I asked Mr. Irving—a question answered by the fact that the queue originated in the days of the French Revolution, when the people were made to buy their bread en queue and have got accustomed to it. 'That is the real secret,' he said. 'Suppose you have sufficient room, which implies that your pit door does not open on to the street, you must educate the public. They have the pit in their own hands. A pit has many curiosities,' he continued. 'Now it is a remarkable thing that although we have to turn money away at our morning performances, the takings are less than in the evening. The

women, who avail themselves largely of the matinées, take up more room than the men, who form the chief portion of the evening audience. For some years we have had a mechanical ticket distributor. The man in charge receives the money, and the machine hands over the ticket. We are thus able to keep a check upon the receipts. The over-takings are, of course, made up of the odd sixpences which people pay in the scramble. On first nights the scene is, I think I may admit it, a remarkable one. Pittites have come as early as eight in the morning, bringing camp stools and luncheon baskets with them, and waiting until the doors open. Those *are* enthusiasts. I cannot help thinking that John Bull likes a scrimmage. There is the same crush if a popular man is announced to preach. But look at any English crowd, whether it is a first night or Lord Mayor's Day. Why, even the women would be disappointed if, when they got home, they couldn't say "Oh dear! look at my bonnet strings"; or, "Bless me, if I wasn't half killed at that Lyceum pit!"'" Time, however, changes many things. The police of to-day enforce the queue system, the scramble for pit and gallery is a thing of the past, seats for those parts of the house can be reserved in advance at more than one London theatre, and bonnet-strings are out of date. The change, in regard to the theatre, at any rate, is undoubtedly for the better.

It was generally observed by those who were present at the Lyceum on Saturday, 2nd May, that Irving had improved his impersonation of Hamlet very considerably and that his performance had a more certain touch than hitherto. The change in his style was described in the *Daily Telegraph* by Clement Scott who, as a critic of acting, had few equals in his day, especially at this period of his career. This is what he said of the Hamlet of 1885: "America sends us back a better actor than the one who left our shores. The voice has gained in mellowness and strength, and is now perfectly under command; the movements of the actor are less nervous and restrained; the attitudes are uniformly graceful and appropriate, and the old peculiarities of manner

have in this play almost wholly disappeared. There was no beating of the foot on the stage in moments of agitation, unknown perhaps to the actor but only too apparent to the audience; the scenes with Ophelia were free from those artistic blemishes that once were only too conspicuous; no one kept harping on Mr. Irving's walk, or pronunciation, or eccentricity, because they never obtruded themselves on critical consideration. That these signs of a marked style and a rare individuality have from the first been signalled out for far too contemptuous satire, and never fairly weighed against the actor's admitted genius, we have always earnestly protested; but now it is a sincere pleasure to all to find that the advice to the player in 'Hamlet' can be properly and conscientiously given by Hamlet himself. It has been well observed that no familiarity in the world breeds contempt in connection with this noble play. No one can ever see it or read it without discovering some new beauties for observation and study. Mr. Irving has enlarged, rounded off, and polished his original conception of Hamlet. He has added to it the rich result of a matured intelligence and a ripened understanding. That which was dim and shadowy is now distinct; that which was attractively interesting is now dominantly beautiful. He has brought out far more clearly than before his view of the intensely affectionate nature of Hamlet, and shows how this exquisite sensitiveness is made a main factor in the wreck of his life. The new Hamlet loved far more than his father. His whole life and soul were not buried with the departed majesty of Denmark. He loves Horatio, and never loses an opportunity of showing it; he leans towards him and upon him. He is in Hamlet's eyes the embodiment of human sympathy. He loves his mother in spite of the injury she has done him; see how he clings to her even when he has upbraided her, when he discovers that he has wrung her heart and is in mental torture. But best of all he loves Ophelia. How few Hamlets show this. They bully, they rave at, they ill-treat her, and curse her. They do not love her. In the 'nunnery' scene they are violent,

impetuous, angry, noisy and stagey, they are seldom princely and chivalrous to a woman they have loved.

"This is now Mr. Irving's finest acting scene. Ophelia, in Hamlet's eyes, according to Mr. Irving, is the last spar to which his wretched and fate-hunted life clings. She might save him, but Ophelia gone, he must battle with the waves of destiny as best he can. He approaches her with infinite tenderness, his hand hardly daring to touch hers, but every muscle in his body vibrating with emotion. He loves, but he dares not. He has to part, but he will not show what that parting means. He is upset, depressed, suspicious, fretful, wilful, but he cannot storm against this 'lily maid' who stands trembling before him. He bids her go to a nunnery, not like a petulant boy, but as a reflective philosopher and a prince. 'We are arrant knaves all: believe none of us.' And even when Hamlet sees the half-concealed Polonius, the discovery does not aggravate his temper, but adds bitterly to his sorrow. The words, 'Where's your father?' are spoken with the tears welling up to the eyes. There is no grief greater to man than deceit in the woman he has loved; no mental anguish is so exquisitely keen. From this the broken-down and dejected Hamlet rushes into sarcasm, bitterness, into tears and reproaches, but never into bullying. He dares not tear Ophelia from his heart, but he must. This is the supreme sacrifice. His last attitude is to fall at her feet, and kiss her hand. This is prophetic enough of the after utterances, 'I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers Could not with all their quantity of love make up my sum'. But henceforward he must be alone, and he rushes from her presence hunted and haunted by despair which is to 'o'er-crow his spirit' and to hurry him on from trouble to death! The play scene has also materially gained in strength, and the business of the scene has been considerably altered. Hamlet's excitement stops the play long before the King is 'frighted with false fire'. The curtain drops, the courtiers crowd round the prostrate Prince, who crawls nearer and nearer to the steps of the throne, in order to throw his insults in his uncle's face. The effect of leaping

on the empty throne is as fine as ever, but, far finer than before, the 'subsidence of emotion' in the murder scene, where the fierceness of invective and satire were never shown with keener force or with more refined polish. And so it would be possible to run on, did space permit, over the renewed strength of Mr. Irving's Hamlet down to the death, when his loving nature is shown in his last farewell to his beloved and constant friend. We have here the suggestion of the embrace without its realisation, the hunger for love down to the last moment that life lasts."

"Hamlet" was acted for a week, "Louis XI." was played on 9th May, "The Merchant of Venice" on the 11th, and "The Bells" on the 16th. It was noticed that Irving's Shylock, like his Hamlet, was now a more finished study than formerly. The actor was never content to let well alone, to rest upon his laurels. He never lost an opportunity for study and reconsideration. This was particularly marked in regard to his acting on his return to London after his second tour of America. His absolutely unconventional, sympathetic, and effective rendering of Shylock was never better than on this occasion. It rivetted the attention of the audience in every scene. Not a look, not a gesture, was wasted. "Three times in the course of last night's performance," said a critic, "were these truths made manifest. In the first scene with Antonio; in the Tubal scene as it is called; and in the trial scene, Mr. Irving has seldom shown himself so fine an actor. We are not discussing now the conception, but the execution; and Mr. Irving's execution in this particular part is so persuasive and admirable that it would be difficult to maintain that Shylock is a man to be execrated, and not one on whom the Christian may extend some feelings of sympathy under the curse that oversways his life. That last low groan of utter dejection and misery as Mr. Irving leaves the scene, that expressive condensation of all that is wretched and despairful in life, is the climax to a masterful study. This famous exit was good at first; it is better now. It was originally an admirable outline; it is now a finished picture. The greatest merit that it has in

art is that it touches the intellect and stimulates the convictions far more than it ever did before. Taken merely as a study of facial expression, it is a masterpiece."

Irving, it will thus be seen, had acted four characters of wide divergence—Hamlet, Louis XI., Shylock, and Mathias—during less than that number of weeks. In the revival of "Olivia," which took place on Wednesday, 27th May, he gave a new proof of his wonderful versatility by impersonating the Vicar of Wakefield in the adaptation, by W. G. Wills, of Goldsmith's immortal story. It is hardly necessary to relate that there were many prognostications of failure, for, it was said, the gentle pathos of Dr. Primrose was not consonant with Irving's style, and a play which had succeeded on the diminutive stage of the Court Theatre would be entirely unsuited for the spacious stage of the Lyceum. The success of the production, and of Irving's interpretation of the old Vicar, belied these gloomy forebodings. Nor did Irving, the manager, leave anything to chance. He relied upon Miss Ellen Terry to repeat, with the public, the fascination which she had exercised seven years previously, when the play was first brought out. He knew that he could not have a better Squire Thornhill than the late William Terriss, who had played the part at the Court Theatre in the original production. Therefore, although Mr. George Alexander was still a member of the Lyceum company, Mr. Terriss was engaged for the rake—and a most admirable performance it was. But Irving went further. He felt that the last act required some alteration for the larger stage, so he paid Mr. Wills a substantial fee, and gave the public a charming scene in which the Vicar and Olivia were shown returning home through the snow and watching the Christmas gathering from outside the house. He made much of the incidental music by Mr. Meredith Ball and of Sir Arthur Sullivan's trio, "Happy Morn". Of his impersonation of the Vicar, the *Daily Telegraph*, in its first notice, published on the morning following the revival, said: "We do not believe that more tears were ever shed over Olivia than fell last night, or that the sentiment

of the beautiful story was ever more truly driven home to all assembled. . . . But the great reason why the play took such a hold of the audience and stirred to the very depth their emotional natures, was that the part of Dr. Primrose was interpreted by Mr. Irving in a manner so admirable, with such

OLIVIA.

Revived at the Lyceum, 28th May, 1885.

Dr. Primrose	Mr. Irving.
Moses	Mr. Norman Forbes.
Squire Thornhill	Mr. Terriss.
Mr. Burchell	Mr. Wenman.
Leigh	Mr. Tyars.
Farmer Flamborough	Mr. H. Howe.
Polly Flamborough	Miss Coleridge.
Phœbe	Miss Mills.
Gipsy Woman	Miss Barnett.
Mrs. Primrose	Miss L. Payne.
Dick and Bill	Misses F. and M. Holland.
Sophia	Miss Winifred Emery.
Olivia	Miss Ellen Terry.

Act I., Scene. The Vicarage Garden—Autumn. Act II., Scene. The Vicarage Parlour. Act III., Scene. The Dragon Inn. Act IV., Scene 1. The Vicarage Garden—Winter; Scene 2. The Vicarage Parlour.

CAST OF THE PRODUCTION AT THE COURT THEATRE, 30TH MARCH, 1878.

Dr. Primrose	Mr. Hermann Vezin.
Moses	Mr. Norman Forbes.
Dick	Miss L. Neville.
Bill	Miss Kate Neville.
Mr. Burchell	Mr. Frank Archer.
Squire Thornhill	Mr. W. Terriss.
Leigh	Mr. Denison.
Farmer Flamborough	Mr. R. Cathcart.
Schoolmaster	Mr. Franks.
Mrs. Primrose	Mrs. Gaston Murray.
Olivia	Miss Ellen Terry.
Sophia	Miss Kate Aubrey.
Polly Flamborough	Miss M. Cathcart.
Phœbe	Miss K. Nicholls.
Sarah	Miss Turtle.
Gipsy Woman	Miss Neville.

a depth of feeling and such wealth of thought, that it became a companion picture, and a fitting one, to Miss Terry's Olivia. We have no hesitation in saying that the scene between father and daughter at the Dragon Inn, when the Vicar comes to seek 'the lamb that has strayed from the fold,' is as fine an instance of true emotional acting as the modern playgoer has

ever seen." In its second criticism, two days later, the same paper wrote :—

"Unquestionably also the play is improved by the reading of the Vicar given by Mr. Henry Irving, a performance more carefully restrained and modulated, a study more innocent of trick and less disfigured by characteristics of marked style and individuality than anything that he has attempted before. At the outset it was feared that he had too quickly been fascinated by the sentiment of the story, that he drifted into pathos too suddenly, that he started the tears too soon, and did not call direct attention to the happy Vicar as he lived amongst his family and friends before the dark clouds settled on his household. But this idea soon vanished when it was seen how the actor by many a subtle and suggestive idea, had penetrated into the mind and nature of the venerable clergyman. It was his love for Olivia, marked with so many happy touches, it was the desire to emphasise the fact that his whole life was bound up in this child that gave so much interest to the first act, and lent such special importance to the subsequent scenes of affection which were devolved from it. Mr. Irving's Vicar is a dignified, resigned, and most pathetic figure, who lingers in the mind long after the theatre is quitted. The scene on the announcement of Olivia's departure was as finely acted as it was boldly conceived. The grief that unnerves, distracts and unmans, the sorrow that paralyses, were expressed with absolute truth and surprising force, and as admirable was the melting from almost ungovernable rage to the comparative calm of resignation. 'Did I curse him?' murmurs the old man, half dazed and in a dream, and so in time his religion and his duty help the white-haired minister to bear the blow. 'She came between me and my love for God; I am punished for it at last.' This is the one strong point on which Mr. Irving evidently leans. It is this resignation to the Divine will, shown all through, that gives such beauty and interest to Mr. Irving's fine study of paternal affection. But, perhaps, the best idea that came into the actor's mind and in effect the finest moment of his acting was in the scene where the Vicar

Photo: Window and Grove, London.

DR. PRIMROSE.

comes to rescue his daughter. For a moment, troubled and travel-stained as he is, he breaks away from her, and remembers that he has a duty to perform. He loves the child surpassingly well, but he is her father, and she has erred. He has to summon up all his courage for a homily on her lost sense of duty. He nerves himself for what he conceives to be necessary, and begins, with tears starting to his eyes, to tell Olivia of her grievous fault. But the old man breaks down over the effort of forced calm; the strain is too much for him; all at once he melts, he casts aside the manner of the priest, and calling Olivia to his arms, becomes her loving father once more. The effect of this was instantaneous. The house was astonished and delighted. As regards the acting, it was a moment of true inspiration, a masterpiece of invention."

Nor was this beautiful play, interpreted by Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, William Terriss, Henry Howe, T. N. Wenman, Miss Winifred Emery, and other excellent players, the only attraction of the Lyceum during the season. It was preceded by a one-act play, entitled "The Balance of Comfort," written by an American play-wright, Mr. H. Guy Carleton. The production cost over £500—so well did Irving attend to these comparatively small affairs—and the cast included Mr. George Alexander, Mr. Martin Harvey, and the late Miss Rose Leclercq. On 21st July, Irving lent the Lyceum, and played Benedick in the church scene from "Much Ado About Nothing," for the benefit of the Actors' Benevolent Fund. During this season, which ended on 30th July,[1] "Olivia" was played fifty-six times.

During the recess, the theatre was entirely redecorated, and great changes were made in the stage. The roof over the stage was elevated by twenty feet, by which improvement the scenery could be taken out of sight of the audience without any rolling or doubling. But amendments in the stage-

[1] During this month—on the 20th—Irving appeared at the Haymarket on the occasion of the retirement from the stage of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft. He recited a valedictory ode written for the occasion by Clement Scott.

manager's sphere of operations, important as they are, do not come within view or even thought of the public. It is with the auditory that most visitors to the theatre are interested. The new scheme of ornament was veritably a new departure. The old box-fronts, covered with panels and borders in high relief, receptacles for dust which could with difficulty be dislodged therefrom, were removed. Originally the design, introduced when Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris began their joint management, late in the 'forties, was intended as a compliment to the lady; all the plaques with groups of cupids, surrounded by elaborate scrolls of birds and squirrels, being adapted from mezzotint designs by her ancestor, the Italian engraver and English Royal Academician, Francesco Bartolozzi, and coloured so as to resemble old Wedgwood bisque. Admirable as these decorations might have been in a more suitable situation, they were altogether out of place in a theatre, and, before the end of the first season, they were universally acknowledged to be a mistake. In their place there was now introduced an Italian scheme of decoration of the period in which Raphael decorated the beautiful Loggia of the Vatican; the paintings being executed by hand on a flat ground, panelled in with massive mouldings. It was from the Vatican Loggia, from the cloisters of the Monastery of St. Paolo at Parma, from the Mazzini Palace, and from the Villa Madama at Rome that the forms of ornament were principally adapted. A white ground showed up the rich pure colouring and the gold mouldings very strikingly, the effect being at once enhanced and kept in key by the sober background of walls covered by an old Italian pattern in two shades of greenish-blue, and by hangings of rich amber-toned yellow, lined with cerise. This last was repeated in the plush covers of the arm-rests, above the gold mouldings, in front of the several tiers. In accord with the box-fronts, the circular ceiling was in Raphaelesque taste, and had divisions each containing a medallion, the subjects severally being Homer, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Menander, Euripides, Plautus, Æschylus, and Terentius. Round the base of the ceiling, immediately above

the cornice, was a frieze of boys playing musical instruments; and this frieze, or zone, being painted in a neutral blue on a gold ground, broke the scheme agreeably, by defining one of its main portions. Over the proscenium arch were groups of boys, emblematically personifying, on a background of blue sky and fleecy clouds, the various functions of acting, music, and dancing. Several improvements in the construction of the auditory were effected, in a manner to interfere very little, if at all, with its original plan. In fact, much of what had been done within range of view from the front was in the way of judicious restoration. Of the six private boxes, which old frequenters of the Lyceum will remember, four were removed leaving only one on either side of the stage level. Such minor improvements as taking away a step in one place, widening a doorway in another, and constructing handrails for the separation of opposing currents of people, were found of great value. The theatre re-opened on 5th September, and "Olivia," which was then played without a first piece, ran until 11th December, when the hundred and thirty-fifty performance at the Lyceum was given. Irving then acted "Louis XI." for six evenings.

The idea of producing "Faust" had been prominent in the mind of the Lyceum manager for over two years. The actual preparation of the play had been his main occupation during many busy months. Irving, accompanied by his scenic artist, Mr. Hawes Craven, spent his August holiday in Nuremberg, in order to gain as much local colour and feeling as possible. He had entrusted W. G. Wills with the adaptation; much thought, and many anxious consultations between the player and the writer, resulted in a workmanlike, yet thoroughly poetical, version of Goethe's great drama. The night of Saturday, 19th December, 1885, was a very eventful one in the career of Henry Irving, for it ushered in a period of long and unexampled prosperity. A brilliant audience, even for the Lyceum, was headed by the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Princess Louise (the Marchioness of Lorne), and all promised well. Yet, despite the utmost forethought, some minor in-

cidents tended to mar the effect of the first part of the play, thus increasing the task of the representative of Mephistopheles whose managerial responsibility was, on this occasion, unusually great. As the evening wore on, the difficulties were overcome, and triumph, artistic and financial, was assured. Irving's entrance as Mephistopheles was most effective. A wretched dog had followed Faust into his study, and the Doctor had given it shelter; it turned to a sulphurous flame, and, through the smoke, came Mephistopheles, attired in travelling habit, and with a long cock's feather in his cap. The clear-cut face, the intelligent eyes, the gleaming white teeth, the alert step, the dominating manner, made an instantaneous impression. Unfortunately, the beautiful visions which Mephistopheles should have shown to Faust would not work, and not only was an excellent stage-effect lost, but the absence of the pictures which would otherwise have been formed in the minds of the spectators, was a serious detriment to the opening of the play. Again, it was observed that the Faust of the evening was unequal to the task which he had undertaken, and, to add to the unrest which had come to many of the audience, the warmth of the greeting accorded to Miss Ellen Terry unnerved the actress and robbed her first entrance of much of its real, or intended, significance. For Margaret, just returning from confession, her eyes cast meekly on the ground, is the personification of simplicity, and she had only two lines to speak—"Sir, I am not pretty, nor yet a lady; I have no need of any escort home"—in the act. In appearance, Miss Terry realised to perfection the girlishness, the tenderness of the character. The applause caused a momentary departure from the character, and the episode was all too brief for the actress to recover herself, so to speak. As the play progressed, however, Miss Terry became merged in the part, and she acted the scene in which Margaret discovers the jewels with a charm which was indefinable but pervading. As for the scene in Margaret's bed-chamber, its delicacy and grace left the spectators enchanted. It was not her fault that the love passages fell flat, for Mr. Conway as Faust was entirely

out of the picture—uninspired, unpoetical, colourless, and essentially modern. It eventually became known that Mr. Conway was suffering from a severe illness, but, of course, the first-night audience was not aware of this misfortune.

This curious combination of unfortunate circumstances only aroused the actor to greater efforts. He exerted himself to

FAUST.

First acted at the Lyceum, 19th December, 1885.

MORTALS:

Faust	Mr. Conway.
Valentine	Mr. Alexander.
Frosch	Mr. Harbury.
Altmayer	Mr. Haviland.
Brander	Mr. F. Tyars.
Siebel	Mr. Johnson.
Student	Mr. N. Forbes.
Burgomaster	Mr. H. Howe.
Citizens	Mr. Helmsley. / Mr. Louther.
Soldier	Mr. M. Harvey.
Martha	Mrs. Stirling.
Bessy	Miss L. Payne.
Ida	Miss Barnett.
Alice	Miss Coleridge.
Catherin	Miss Mills.
Margaret	Miss Ellen Terry.

SPIRITS:

Mephistopheles	Mr. Henry Irving.
Witches	Mr. Mead. / Mr. Carter. / Mr. Archer. / Mr. Clifford.

Act I., Scene 1. Faust's Study; Scene 2. The Witches' Kitchen; Scene 3. Nuremberg—St. Lorenz Platz. Act II., Scene 1. Nuremberg—Margaret's Chamber; Scene 2. Nuremberg—The City Wall; Scene 3. Nuremberg—Martha's House; Scene 4. Nuremberg—Martha's Garden; Scene 5. Trees and Mountains; Scene 6. Nuremberg—Margaret's Garden. Act III., Scene. Nuremberg—Street by Church. Act IV., Scene. Summit of the Brocken. Act V., Scene. Nuremberg—Dungeon.

the utmost in the scenes with Martha, and aroused a peal of laughter just at the right moment by the humour which he infused into the exclamation: "Where will she go to by and by, I wonder? I won't have her!" The depth of meaning which he imparted to the last sentence was something wonderful and never to be forgotten by those who heard

Irving speak those sententious words. Thereafter, all went well. The exquisite pathos of Miss Terry in the scene where Margaret prays before the statue of the Mater Dolorosa—

> Oh! holy maiden! thou who knowest sorrows
> Thou through whose anguished heart the sword hath pierced—
> Incline thy gracious countenance to me;
> My misery is past my tongue to tell—

won all hearts. In this scene, indeed, Miss Terry was insurpassable. She has never done anything finer. "Here was pathos drawn to its finest point," said a contemporary description. "But the tragedy is inexorable. The story has, indeed, its thought too deep for tears. Valentine has to come home from the wars, to find his loved sister dishonoured, and to fall under the sword of her betrayer. This is one of the very finest scenes ever designed or realised on the Lyceum stage. The advance of the soldiers, the hurrying of the crowd, the tramp of the men, all are quick and effective. The duel itself is rapid and instantaneous, and Valentine, in the dying daylight, falls by the well at which the women have chattered over the ruin of a woman. Then comes, as Margaret issues from the house, one of the truest and soundest moments in the recorded art of Miss Ellen Terry—

> My brother! Ah! God help me! it cannot be!
> Who?
> Oh! he will curse me!

We hold that these words, 'Oh! he will curse me!' are as finely spoken as can be; it was the true ring of agony that one so seldom hears. . . . The scene of wild devilry on the Brocken Mountain must be witnessed; it cannot be described. We venture to think that nothing so daring or effective has ever been seen on the stage before. In the heart of this pandemonium, this shrieking, gibbering crowd, among these witches and apes, in the glow and glare of this 'feu d' enfer,' contrasted with shadowy greys and greens that suggest Gustave Doré in every corner of the picture, stands the bright-red figure, this incomparable Mephistopheles. And it is not alone the figure that attracts; it is the face, that calm,

destructive, mischievous face; it is not alone the terror of the spirits that appals us—it is the kingly splendour and familiarity with evil that crown the master of them. It is Mr. Irving who is the dominating power of this extraordinary scene; it is his cry of exultation that leads them on to still more hideous excess." At the end of the play, Irving could do no more than thank the audience, in a few broken sentences, for their sympathy and their enthusiastic welcome of his production. After a few representations, Mr. George Alexander was taken out of the small part of Valentine, and entrusted with the character of Faust, the visions of the first act were in good working order, and "Faust" became the talk of London.

CHAPTER VI.

December, 1885—June, 1886.

The wonderful run of "Faust"—Sixteen months—Receipts and expenses—Over £40,000 profit on the first run—Irving's Mephistopheles—Another accident—An interesting matinée—Royalty at the Lyceum—Dinners and suppers—Irving invited to Oxford—His "discourse" there—Some more compliments—Irving imitations—The actor's quiet rebuke—Trouble from this cause in America—An explanation—Verses on the various imitators.

"FAUST" at the Lyceum has to be considered from two points of view—on the artistic side, in relation to Goethe's poem, and, on the managerial side, in regard to the treasury. In reference to the commercial result, it may be useful to set down the actual facts, and very potent ones they are. The first run of the play lasted from 19th December, 1885, to 31st July, 1886; it was resumed with the re-opening of the Lyceum on 11th September, from which date "Faust" was played continuously until 22nd April, 1887. On the last date, the three hundred and seventy-fifth representation took place, a record in the great productions of the Lyceum which stands absolutely alone. Allowing for the vacation of six weeks during the summer of 1886, this meant a continuous performance, and to crowded houses, for sixteen solid months! For the last three months of the London season of 1887, various plays from the Lyceum repertory were given, the total number of representations of "Faust" being thus brought up to three hundred and ninety-six. The other pieces played in the regular programme were "The Bells" and "Jingle," "The Merchant of Venice," "Louis XI.," "Much Ado About Nothing," and "Olivia". The expenses, of course, were tremendous, but so were the receipts. From 4th September,

1885, until 31st July, 1886, they were as follows: Receipts, £87,114 13s. 11d.; Expenses, £55,899 9s. 8d. From 11th September, 1886, to 16th July, 1887, they were: Receipts, £75,375 14s.; Expenses, £63,757 19s. 3d.—the profit for the two seasons being £42,832 19s. For "Faust" alone—19th December, 1885, to 15th July, 1887, the receipts and expenditure were £125,316 16s. 2d. and £84,542 12s. respectively. So that the profit on the first run of "Faust" at the Lyceum amounted to the respectable total of exactly £40,774 4s. 2d.! In 1896, a writer who was as ignorant of theatrical history as he was prejudiced against Irving, had the temerity to state that "Faust" only appealed to the more unenlightened parts of the house while the stalls people stayed away. "I have had the curiosity," said the actor, in regard to this ridiculous statement, "to look into the Lyceum books, and I find that in the first season of 'Faust' nearly seventy thousand stalls were sold, a bagatelle of some five and thirty thousand pounds from the people who didn't come!"

Great as was the pecuniary success of the venture, there was the gratification of knowing that it had been secured by worthy means. It is not the purpose of this biography to cite mere eulogy or to draw upon the voluminous notices of the newspaper critics, in stating the case. Otherwise, very many pages might be filled with selections from hundreds of notices and reviews of Irving's rendering of Mephistopheles and of the Lyceum production of "Faust". One of the most informing of the many criticisms must stand for the rest. It appeared in the Liverpool *Daily Post*, and was from the pen of the editor of that paper, Mr. (now Sir) Edward R. Russell. As in the case of the same writer's essay on "Hamlet," only a few of its most important passages can be given here. But they are sufficient to denote the conception and execution of Irving's Mephistopheles and his treatment of the play:—

"Mephistopheles has too often been a mocking, debonnair French devil. The upward dart of a droll, pointed moustache has been modern and whimsical and masqueradish. The manner has corresponded. Satan, as it were, has seemed

to be 'out on the spree,' his banter playful, his tone jocose. One almost expected him to turn out of the Grand Opera, to take a *voiture*, to drive home to an *entresol* on the Boulevard des Italiens, and to smoke a cigarette on the sofa before doffing his red habiliments and slipping into bed. Irving suggests no such associations, but quite others. His headgear sports the defiant cock's feather, and it is a quick ensign of fiendhood, but there is no other concession to gaiety or convention of fashion. This lurid vermilion being is a power of darkness; visible as such, audible as such, according to the ideas of the time which he realises and identifies; not because he would have been found mingling with people of that century any more than with ourselves, but because, such as he is, he is the very devil whom those men and women might have expected to meet if ever the Prince of Darkness had crossed their path. This is the great strength of the representation. . . .

"The especial features of Mr. Irving's rendering of Mephistopheles which support this element of the play are not easily describable, and it is an ill office to spoil his effects by attempting to put them in words on paper. What is most impressive besides the biting sardonic wit of the demon is the atmosphere of doom and badness which is with great art sustained around him, without apparent effort, by the actor's vivid instinct. We feel surprised that Faust should feel it so little, and practically heed it not at all; and when Margaret always sickens and chokes in it, her doing so seems the most natural thing in the world, and quite relieves the moral sense.

"One thing in the conversation of Mephistopheles pierces to the thoughtful listener's very marrow. It is the smiling scorn the devil shows for all scruples which he knows will be overcome. Faust reflects aloud on the dreadfulness of the guilt of leading Margaret astray. She is awaiting him. You might suppose, if you did not know human nature, that the self-reproaching lover would walk off in the opposite direction. Mephistopheles does understand human nature. 'Get in, you moral rake, and dry her tears,' says he to his victim; and then you see, as Mephistopheles several times boasts, how little

temptation besides devilish opportunity is needed to draw men into sin. The delivery of the words just cited, and of all others of like cynical tenor by Mr. Irving, is most expressive. 'I am myself,' he says in one place, 'an exemplary Christian,' and all the quintessence of profane belief is concentrated in his tone and accents. Demeanour, attitude, and, above all, facial expression, which is obviously caused automatically by the thought, not mechanically by the will, greatly strengthens all that is achieved by fit and pregnant elocution.

"The imperturbability of the fiend is wonderfully combined, too, with a keen sensitiveness equally essential to the character. Take as an illustration of the whole the scene of Faust's duel with Margaret's brother, beginning with the truly demoniac ballad which Mephistopheles chants to the viol. How light, yet grave the manner; how polished, yet how quivering; how masterly the sword parryings, from which flashes forth the electric current; how ghastly the comic heartlessness of the lamenting, long drawn ironic 'Oh' over Valentine's body; how swift and mandatory the urging of Faust from the scene; and then what a remorseless culmination in the intoned suggestions of the evil spirit as Margaret kneels in the great church imploring the Virgin's aid!

"In a lighter vein, the intercourse with old Martha is perfect. The ingratiating, polite but restrained gallantry of the elderly, travelled gentleman, who has not quite ceased to make a point of being agreeable to the ladies, is of the very highest comedy, and, of course, it is admirably played up to by Mrs. Stirling. Even in all this, however, the mediæval key is always predominant. It is diabolism, not *diablerie*.

"By the same standard and with the same result, we judge the great Brocken scene, the Walpurgis night revels, which are represented with magnificent effect. Here failure might have been reasonably foretold. How comes success? By making the conditions of the scene compatible with faith. To this end, every supernatural appearance has to be softened, as it were, by chosen light and faultless mechanism, so as to save the imagination all petty difficulties. Then the spectator is awed

by the vast and noble rugged crags of the scene, which prepare him for much. The toilsome ascent of Mephistopheles and Faust carry on the illusion, and when the Evil One stands on the precipice from which his guest shrinks cowering back, a mastery is established over the fancy which prepares for more than mere spectacular sensation. Forms weird but squalid begin to congregate and gibber. There is somehow a power in their coarse humanness, as well as in their *rapport* with the nether powers. Their language, too, is daringly idiomatic and common. 'Demonology and witchcraft' are here brought craftily and courageously together. At a word of the devil-prince, all is mountain solitude. At another word, all is witches' sabbath and wild revel. Yet not rough, for the stage-manager knows where to ease the task of fancy and how to be vague where too great clearness would disenthral. And so the rout runs high. And Mephistopheles, seated on a rock in front, is fondled by two queer juvenile-seeming creatures, for whom he appears to have, and they for him, an affection that curdles the beholder.

"The meaning of it all? The sapient think the scene superfluous. Is it so in Goethe? Were it here mere spectacle, faulty and jarring as most spectacle is, superfluous it would doubtless be. What is it besides spectacle? To reply would be to dogmatise impertinently. Different persons will see different things in it, and some may only see a ballet of witches and devils, terminating in the most wonderful transformation of the whole inanimate prospect into glowing incandescent hot-coal masses, the production of which is surely a startling advance in the scene-painter's art. But there is more; much more. . . . The decoration of the whole piece is very appropriate and striking. The architecture of Nuremburg, the gardens, the skies, the cathedral, realise thoroughly and without garishness the beauty of the old-world scene. The bells are beautiful. The music is in accord with the sentiment, and the present writer owns that instead of longing for Gounod —which he loves at Covent Garden—the operatic airs and marches would have discomposed for him the thoroughly

original effect. As for the Brocken scene, that is a triumph *sui generis* which crowns the already splendid fame of Telbin."

Another source of gratification to Irving in connection with "Faust" was the vogue which the Lyceum production gave to Goethe's work in England. There instantly arose an enormous demand for translations of "Faust," and the newspapers and magazines contained many essays on such subjects as the lameness of Mephistopheles. "Could Faust marry Margaret?" was one question of the time which was gravely debated. The *Saturday Review*, in its issue of 16th July, 1886, when "Faust" was completing the first seven months of its run at the Lyceum, observed that its attraction remained unabated, and, "what is not always implied in such a fact," it pointed out, "the performance not only maintains, but has ever increased its public favour. It is computed, we believe, that upwards of one hundred thousand translations of 'Faust' have been sold by various booksellers since this piece began its run, and Mr. Irving may boast to have done more to popularise that work of genius in this country than all the innumerable books, essays, and articles that have ever been devoted to it." This was a great accomplishment, and one of which Irving invariably spoke with a pride which was quite justifiable.

During the long run of "Faust," when Irving might well have relaxed his strenuous work, with an easy mind for money matters, he pursued the opposite course, leading a busy life apart from his regular routine. Hardly had "Faust" been launched ere—on the afternoon of 8th January, 1886—he gave the use of the Lyceum for the annual general meeting of the Actors' Benevolent Fund, over which he presided. His speech on this occasion was an admirable compound of practical suggestion and charity. A month later, and a nasty accident occurred, which fortunately had no permanent ill effects. At the end of the first scene of "Faust," Mephistopheles had to carry off the rejuvenated Doctor in a cloud of steam. By means of a slide, an ascent was made. Through the improper working of the apparatus, both actors were thrown on the stage. Mr. Alexander was only slightly

hurt, but Irving's face was cut in three places. One of the wounds, over the left eye, had to be stitched up. The cuts were covered with plaister, which had to be frequently renewed during the evening, as Irving continued his performance.

On Monday, 19th April, he had an exceptionally busy and interesting day. In the afternoon, he gave a performance of "Faust" to which he invited his professional brethren from the other theatres, and, in the evening, he took the chair at Willis's rooms for a charity. At the matinée, extra rows of stalls were added, and, it need hardly be stated, every one of the guests was treated with the utmost courtesy. There was no distinction—the serious drama, comedy, burlesque, pantomime—all were well represented. The greatest good-will was manifest throughout the afternoon, and, at the end of the performance, the demands for a speech could not be resisted. The Lyceum manager began by expressing his delight at being able to extend such an invitation to the profession, and only regretted that he could not offer them a private box apiece; he would have liked to have done so, but of course "needs must when the devil drives". He emphasised the gratification with which the whole of the Lyceum company took up the idea when it was suggested to them and gracefully responded to his appeal, for it always gives actors and actresses sincere pleasure to appear before their fellow-workers, and he for one had "the highest opinion of their opinions". He then declared how pleasant it was to appear before such an audience, because actors invariably applaud in the right place. He quoted Edwin Forrest, who on one occasion appealed to a singularly dull theatre and said, "Look here, ladies and gentlemen, if you don't applaud I can't act!" "If audiences only knew the encouragement of applause," he urged, in his most convincing and humorous manner, "they would really get more value for their money." And so the merry speech rambled on until the speaker reminded all present that he had to appear directly at Willis's Rooms, to take the chair at a public gathering, and to plead the cause of the Dramatic and Musical Sick Fund. "In fact," said he, amidst roars of

laughter, "I seriously thought, after the Church scene, of sending round the plate and making a collection. But I thought better of it." In conclusion, very earnestly and "fraternally" he thanked one and all for their attendance, and this exceptional audience, with words of enthusiastic praise upon their lips, streamed out into the Strand in the spring sunlight. His presence as chairman at Willis's Rooms early on the same evening—the occasion being the thirtieth annual dinner in aid of the Dramatic and Musical Sick Fund, resulted in an assemblage of some two hundred celebrities and an exceedingly handsome addition to the coffers of the society. His speech was earnest, eloquent, and very much to the purpose.

We have already seen that the first performance of "Faust" was attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales: a Royal visit to the Lyceum was now almost a monthly occurrence. At this time, also, Irving gave many suppers after the play, and dinners on Sundays, in the Beefsteak Club rooms adjoining the theatre. One of the most notable of these suppers was in April, to the Abbé Liszt. In June, he had the honour of being invited to Oxford to deliver an address. This, it should be noted, was the third time that University honours had been accorded to him—the first occasion being at Dublin in 1876, the second at Harvard, in 1885. The lecture was given at the suggestion of Mr. W. L. Courtney, then a Don of the New College, and in response to an invitation from the late Dr. Jowett, the Vice-Chancellor of the University and the Master of Balliol. Irving left London after the morning performance at the Lyceum, on Saturday, 26th June, and, despite the fatigue of acting and of travelling, made his appearance in the Examination Hall of the new schools precisely at the appointed time—half-past nine o'clock. The procession to the rostrum was headed by the Vice-Chancellor, and the proctors of the University escorted the actor, who, by the way, was the guest of Dr. Jowett during his brief stay in Oxford. The Dean of Christ Church was present, and each important college was represented on the occasion. The discourse, which was entitled "English Actors: Their Characteristics and Methods,"

was listened to with intense interest, and, at times, applause betokened some happy hit on the part of the actor. The lecture over—it finished at a quarter to eleven—the Vice-Chancellor rose, and, to the delight of all present, revealed an unexpected secret and gave a memorable discourse on art. He declared that "some of his young friends" desired to make a presentation to the lecturer of an illuminated address on behalf of the undergraduates of Oxford, and to offer to him with their affectionate sympathy a handsomely bound "Life of Shakespeare," with their sincere good wishes. But before introducing his "young friends," the Vice-Chancellor congratulated the actor and praised his efforts on behalf of dramatic art in words of remarkable significance. The Vice-Chancellor resumed his seat amidst applause again and again renewed. Upon this Mr. Bourchier, then an excellent amateur actor, who had done much for theatricals at Oxford, and had been, with Mr. Courtney, of New College, the chief pioneer in the new liberal movement in favour of this section of art, came forward and read the beautifully illuminated address, which was signed by Arthur Bourchier, A. D. Carey, E. F. Macpherson, J. F. S. Spencer Bell, F. O. Wethered, G. C. Lindsay, D. H. M'Lean, and E. H. Clark.

The address was as follows:—

"To Mr. Henry Irving, on the occasion of a Lecture delivered before the University, 26th June, 1886.

"We, undergraduate members of the University of Oxford, desire to express the satisfaction which we feel at the presence of so distinguished a visitor on classic ground. It is with unfeigned pleasure that we welcome you to this ancient university, which, full of traditions of distinguished men in the past, has now the honour of listening to a lecture on the subject of his own art from one of the most eminent artists of the present time.

"With still keener interest have some of us who belong to an university dramatic society appreciated your efforts in recent years to raise the tone of dramatic art in England. We have

recognised the high ideal which you have always kept before your eyes ; we have admired those patient and loving studies in archæology and literature which have given so much reality to your plays at the Lyceum Theatre ; and we have watched with keen and enthusiastic interest the fine intellectual quality of all those representations, from Hamlet to Mephistopheles, with which you have enriched the contemporary stage. Feeling that it is to your influence that we owe both deeper knowledge and more reverent study of the master mind of Shakespeare, we beg you to accept this address and the volume which accompanies it as a slight token of the admiration with which you are regarded among the junior members of the university."

Henry Irving, having accepted the illuminated address from Mr. Bourchier and the "Shakespeare" from another undergraduate, proceeded, in a few well-chosen and graceful words, to thank the Vice-Chancellor for his encouraging remarks, and the undergraduates for their sincere sympathy. Not only on his own behalf, but on that of his brother and sister actors, he thanked them for the compliment that had been paid to the art to which their lives were devoted, and he promised faithfully to keep stored in his memory the record of an evening which augured well for the future that no one could foresee, but which was full of promise and of hope.

The year 1886 brought to the actor, not only additional honour and the greatest of popularity and success, but some petty annoyances. These latter, however, were concerned with some personal imitations of himself, but he took the incidents in good part, as, indeed, he could well afford to do. He was a pronounced subject for caricature on the stage, as well as by the brush of the painter. He had a contempt for this low and easy form of buffoonery, but he seldom took any steps to repress it—for he knew that it would find its own level without any action on his part. The Gaiety Theatre was the scene of three so-called burlesques of Henry Irving. The first of them occurred in October, 1880, in a skit, by F. C. Burnand and the late H. Pottinger Stephens, of "The

Corsican Brothers," which was then being played at the Lyceum. The chief feature of the piece was a parody, by Mr. E. W. Royce, of the representative of Louis and Fabien dei Franchi. The parody was not very good, for Mr. Royce is a small man, as many people are aware, and, in height alone, he could not hit off the actor on the opposite side of the street.[1] On the second occasion, matters were different. "The Corsican Brothers and Co., Limited" was only a short piece, but, on 31st May, 1886, there was introduced from America a burlesque called "Adonis," which occupied the entire evening. The chief feature of this production was a travesty of Henry Irving by Mr. Henry E. Dixey, a handsome young actor, totally unlike the English actor in form and feature—excepting in height. Therein lay the chief merit of the impersonation. There was no particular harm in it, but it was not a graceful act for a player from another land to parody the recognised leader of the English stage within a few yards of the house which he had made famous for all time in theatrical history. Irving treated the matter with contempt, but he managed, in his own inimitable way, to rebuke the want of taste. On 9th June, he was the chairman of a supper given by the members of the Arundel Club to the late E. L. Blanchard, for many years the theatrical critic and chronicler of the *Daily Telegraph*. Among the various guests was the American actor, Mr. Dixey, who took part in the entertainment which followed the supper, and Irving, in calling upon him for his contribution to the entertainment of the evening said: "I will not call upon Mr. Dixey to give an imitation of myself, lest it should be so good as to put me out of conceit with my own identity. I congratulate myself, however, and the public, on one thing, and that is, supposing some evening I cannot appear at the Lyceum, they can send round for Mr. Dixey to fill my place. Probably, on the next day I should be told that on this occasion Mr. Irving played his part with more than his usual ability and artistic

[1] The stage-door of the old Gaiety Theatre was in Wellington Street, opposite the Lyceum.

effect." The quiet sarcasm of these remarks was not lost upon the company.

On the third occasion upon which he was burlesqued at the Gaiety, he was compelled to take action, as will be seen later on in these pages. In 1886, however, he had another imitator—this time, an unconscious one. A player who had been for several years a member of his company, had transferred his services to Mr. Wilson Barrett, and when, in the autumn of the year named, that actor produced the drama, "Claudian," in New York, it was said that the representative of the Tetrarch was openly imitating Henry Irving. Some of the New York papers were very vigorous in their protests—which, considering the Dixey business, was not without its humour—and the proverbial storm in a tea-cup raged for some weeks. The circumstances are fully explained by the following letter which Mr. Barrett published in the American papers: "Will you allow me the space to correct a little misunderstanding which has arisen respecting the performance of the Tetrarch by Mr. Charles Hudson, of my company? There seems to be an impression in the minds of some of the dramatic critics that I have engaged the gentleman to come to America for the express purpose of giving a burlesque of Mr. Henry Irving's idiosyncrasies, and thereby to hold up that distinguished artist to ridicule. Such a charge as this could only be made against me by those who do not know me. I do not at all blame the writers who have made this accusation, if such has been their conviction, for had I been guilty of so contemptible, detestable, and un-actor-like a proceeding, I should have deserved the strongest condemnation possible. But what are the facts of this case? Mr. Charles Hudson is a great admirer and personal friend of Mr. Irving. He was for five years a valued member of Mr. Irving's company. Almost the last person to wish him Godspeed and success in America was Mr. Irving. Mr. Irving came to the Princess's to see 'Claudian,' on which occasion Mr. Hudson played the Tetrarch as he plays it now, excepting only that the resemblance to Mr. Irving was even more remarkable.

Mr. Irving was delighted with his young protégé, and expressed his opinion of Mr. Hudson's performance in the highest possible terms of commendation. Mr. Irving was perfectly aware of the points of resemblance referred to, but it never occurred to him to resent them. On the contrary, Mr. Hudson has informed me that Mr. Irving will at any time make an opening for him in his company should he feel disposed to leave me. Mr. Hudson's father, who is at the present moment a popular member of Mr. Irving's company, has written a letter to the London *Daily News*, in which he scouts the idea that his son intended to burlesque Mr. Irving. This letter, I believe, was written with the sanction and approval of Mr. Irving himself, as in a cable dispatch sent by that gentleman yesterday to Mr. Hudson he says: 'Long leader and letter from 'Dad' in *Daily News*. Have sent papers. Kindest wishes from Mr. Irving.' That there should be no doubt, in my own mind at least, on the matter, I cabled yesterday to Mr. Irving asking him to cable back to me for publication an expression of his own opinion on the accusation that I had put forward Mr. Hudson's performance of the Tetrarch as an intentional insult to him, to which Mr. Irving immediately replied as follows: 'I am sure, dear Barrett, all my friends in America wish you right well, as I do, and I also feel sure that you could not do so silly a thing.—HENRY IRVING.'

"Permit me to add, in conclusion, that I have not come to America to insult, burlesque, or intentionally injure Mr. Irving or any other member of my profession, be he great or small. I have come here wholly and solely to do my level best, by the exercise of such talents as I possess, to gain the goodwill of the great American public; and if I succeed in the future as well as I have in the past week I shall be far too happy and contented a man to harbour the slightest resentment even against those gentlemen who have so mistaken me and my disposition as to charge me with a mean, dirty, and contemptible action."

This unintentional imitation of Irving, following so hard upon the avowed burlesque by Mr. Dixey, gave rise to a vast

amount of newspaper correspondence and comment. In the following verses, written by L. F. Austin, and published by the *Pall Mall Gazette* in November, the actors mentioned were all more or less notorious for their imitations, intentional or otherwise, of Henry Irving:—

A BALLAD OF BURLESQUES.

"Mr. Irving was perfectly aware of the points of resemblance referred to, but it never occurred to him to resent them."—*Mr. Wilson Barrett's letter to the New York papers.*

Dead of night in Union Square,
Just an hour before the day:
Thro' the white electric glare
Dissipated shadows play.
Shadows, yes—but what are they—
Phantom forms of mournful mien?
Are they cloud, or are they clay,
Those pale faces shaven clean?

Slow they march in Indian file,
With a quaint spasmodic tramp;
Smiling one peculiar smile,
Stamping one peculiar stamp.
Is it conscience or the cramp
Makes them clutch their breasts and pant,
While their eyes, like lighthouse lamp,
Shoot a sudden glance aslant?

Hark! They speak—strange accents come,
Murmuring in a monotone—
Mixture of a muffled drum
And a faint asthmatic groan:
"Praises to one man alone,
Lord of every look and limb!
Irving marks us for his own—
We so much resemble him!"

Rises now a bitter cry:
"Master, I have long revered,
Hear your only double sigh,
Faithful Hudson, wan and weird!
Critics here have raged and jeered,
Called my homage gross burlesque;
O my soul is sad and seared,
Martyred to the picturesque!"

Then this wail: "But of your spell
Have I not the largest share?
Heed not Henley[1] and Odell,[2]
They are but an aping pair;
Gray as yours my tragic hair,
Yet I do not get my due—
Master, had the fates been fair,
Irving would have been Bellew!"

"'Aping, quotha!' Ribald spark,
With Odell's to match your claim!
I have most of Irving's mark,
And our minds are just the same;
Yet there's neither cash nor fame,
Tho' I'm always lean and grim;
Friends, is this a paying game,
This so much resembling him?"

"'Paying!'" cries another voice,
"I have passed for him for years,
And if people made a choice,
Flockton[3] would get all the cheers!
You can well endure some sneers
When the dollars you can scoop—
Put your posters round the spheres,
Call yourself the Irving Troupe!"

See—they start with wild grimace!
Can it be that spirits quake
At that form of chiselled grace,
And that wig of classic make?
"Boys," he cries, "you ain't awake,
Tho' it's time that you should know
My Adonis takes the cake—
Guess I boss this Irving show!"

Still they stare, bereft of speech,
While he laughs with mocking glee,
Then with one despairing screech,
Turn their faces to the sea;
"Bully boys, good-bye," says he;
"Tell Mephisto in the Strand
He is imitating *me*,
Till we meet in Dixey's Land!"

[1] The late E. J. Henley, brother of W. E. Henley.
[2] Mr. E. J. Odell, a member of the Lyceum company when Irving joined it.
[3] The late C. F. Flockton, an English actor who played for many years in America.

CHAPTER VII.

July, 1886—October, 1887.

Mathias and Jeremy Diddler for a benefit—New scenes in "Faust"—A remarkable reading of "Hamlet"—Produces "Werner" for the benefit of a veteran dramatist—Westland Marston's tribute—Irving gives three more benefits—"The Amber Heart" produced—"Olivia" by desire of the Prince of Wales—Farewell speech—An amusing experience—Compliments galore—Stratford-on-Avon—The gift of an American—Irving's address—His praise of Americans—Their appreciation of Shakespeare—Luncheon at the Town Hall—The "Poet of all Time" a player.

THE fame of the Lyceum actor-manager grew apace during these years of great prosperity and he was more untiring than ever in doing good works. Thus, on 24th July, 1886, he gave a special performance at the Lyceum, "for this night only," in aid of the Actors' Benevolent Fund. The programme was a most attractive one—"The Bells" and "Raising the Wind". In addition to acting Mathias, he played Jeremy Diddler—a character which he had not played since 1879. And Miss Ellen Terry appeared, for the first time, as Peggy, in Kenney's old farce. Irving had the privilege of announcing that "Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales have graciously signified their intention of being present". There was a great house, and it is satisfactory to be able to state that at the next annual meeting of members of the Fund—held at the Lyceum on the afternoon of 14th January following—Mr. Pinero, on behalf of the executive committee, presented the President with an illuminated address, in which the invaluable services which he had rendered were recognised. His generosity in regard to the benefit performance of the previous July was especially acknowledged—"an act which relieved the committee of many difficulties, and which produced a result more successful than any of the pre-

ceding benefits, and which was of signal assistance in a year of exceptional pressure". At that same meeting, the President alluded in characteristic fashion, to the approaching Jubilee of Queen Victoria. No more fitting memorial, he said, of the reign of their beloved Sovereign could be made than for the actors and actresses of Great Britain to stand shoulder to shoulder in support of such a noble fund as theirs, a fund which unostentatiously and secretly relieved the wants of so many. He could not understand how any actor could possibly neglect to support the fund. Their motto was "Help for all who need help". He stated that of the eight thousand actors in the kingdom, only twelve hundred subscribed to the fund.

Resuming the story of the ordinary work of the Lyceum, it must be set down that, on 15th November, 1886, the two hundred and forty-fourth performance of "Faust" was celebrated by the introduction of two new scenes—the Student's Cellar and the Witches' Kitchen. On Tuesday, 18th January, the three hundredth representation took place. This remarkable event was celebrated by special programmes for each part of the house, printed on hand-made paper, in gold, silver, and red, and there was a joyous supper in the Beefsteak rooms to follow. The New Year thus started most auspiciously for the actor. The good promise was fully borne out, for 1887—a memorable year in the history of England, the fiftieth year of Victoria—was a glorious one for the actor. He celebrated his prosperity by giving, in one month, no less than five special performances, the entire profits of which—£2140 1s. 8d.—went to others. This was in June.

Before this remarkable example of generosity, he gave a special reading of "Hamlet". On 23rd February—Ash-Wednesday, when the London theatres were closed—he read the tragedy on behalf of the building fund of the Birkbeck Institute. The reading took place in the hall of the Institute, near Chancery Lane. It was one of the most remarkable intellectual achievements in the career of the actor. He absolutely rivetted the attention of the audience for nearly three hours, and gave such an idea of this sublime tragedy as

few of them could have conceived or imagined to be possible. The beauty of Irving's conception of Hamlet was well-known; but on this occasion, undisturbed by theatrical surroundings, auditors were able to drink in the full essence of the idea and to enjoy its subtler shades and intense mental colouring. Seldom has a Hamlet more human, more lovable, more reverential, or more sensitively imaginative been presented to Shakespearean students. In certain scenes, the actor was positively rapt, and his countenance was lighted up with a beauty of intellectual fervour that was especially striking. Such a hold upon the audience did he possess that, notwithstanding the length of the recital and the strain on the nerves of those who listened, there was, for at least a minute or so, at the conclusion, a solemn hush of silence. The book was closed, the play was over; but no one felt inclined to move or speak. The actor had awed his audience into a reverential attitude that was truly remarkable. Unlike most reciters of "Hamlet," Henry Irving did not reserve his whole intellectual force for the Prince of Denmark. He showed not only that he could act all the characters in the play, but that he could give them a special grace and meaning. At last the beautiful character of Horatio had been mastered, and shown in its most tender and human light. The dialogues between Hamlet and Horatio are inexpressibly beautiful; the friendship between the men seemed to be like that older companionship, so sweet that it was literally "passing the love of woman". There was a positive stir of emotion as Hamlet, leaning in fancy on his "own familiar friend," said these beautiful words with consummate tenderness: "We defy augury; there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow! If it be now 'tis not to come: if it be not to come, it will be now: if it be not now yet it will come: the readiness is all!" And the King, also, was a fine, original, and new idea. Irving made him just the winning, handsome, thoughtless man who would attract a Gertrude, a woman who preferred a handsome man to one of mental attractiveness. And his interpretation of the Ghost, Polonius, the Gravedigger, and Laertes contributed new ideas

to "Hamlet". At the end of the recital, the silence was intense, so spell-bound were the spectators. It was broken by one man who called out, "Thank you, sir," and then the torrent of applause which broke forth rewarded the reciter for the great intellectual treat which he had afforded the audience, many of whom were unaccustomed to theatres. The physical strain must have been enormous, but Irving repaired to the Lyceum where he entertained at supper a few personal friends, who had witnessed his latest triumph.

A typical instance of Irving's grand way of doing charitable acts is seen in a performance which he organised for the

WERNER.

Acted at the Lyceum on 1st June, 1887.

Werner	Mr. Henry Irving.
Ulric	Mr. George Alexander.
Gabor	Mr. T. N. Wenman.
Baron Stralenheim	Mr. C. Glenney.
Idenstein	Mr. Howe.
Rodolph	Mr. Haviland.
Fritz	Mr. J. Carter.
Henrick	Mr. Archer.
Eric	Mr. Calvert.
Arnheim	Mr. Clifford.
Ludwig	Mr. Harvey.
Josephine	Miss Ellen Terry.
Ida Stralenheim	Miss Winifred Emery.

Act I., Scene. Hall of Palace in Silesia. Act II., Scene 1. Exterior of Palace; Scene 2. Hall of the same; Scene 3. Secret Passage; Scene 4. Garden. Act III., Scene. Hall in Castle Siegendorf, near Prague. Act IV., Scene. The Seine. Period 1648—Close of the Thirty Years' War.

benefit of Westland Marston, an aged and much-respected author of plays which had been acted by Macready and Charles Kean. Irving produced "Werner" especially for the occasion and played the principal part. Some alterations in Byron's tragedy were made by F. A. Marshall, the dresses were designed by Mr. Seymour Lucas, A.R.A., the scenery was painted by Mr. Hawes Craven. Supporting the impersonator of the gloomy Count were Miss Ellen Terry—who appeared for the first time on the stage as Josephine, "For this occasion only"—Miss Winifred Emery, Mr. George Alexander,

the late Mr. Howe, and other excellent actors. The theatre was packed from floor to roof at enhanced prices—the stalls were two guineas each—when, on Wednesday afternoon, 1st June, said a contemporary account, "the curtain rose and discovered Mr. Henry Irving, with his sad face and 'sable-silvered' hair sitting at the table in the familiar Macready attitude: the whole scene enveloped in gloom, and sadness, with Miss Ellen Terry in the dark background, and for the first time in her life with pretty grey hair, as befitted the wife of so sorrowful a man as Werner, and the mother of so impulsive and handsome a lad as Ulric. The picture presented was a striking one, and for longer than the accustomed period this deeply interested and unusually intelligent audience expressed its approbation in loud and demonstrative cheers." The monotony of the character of Werner is a terrible thing for the actor to struggle against—the playgoers of the earlier period of the nineteenth century delighted in perpetual gloom, but, even in 1887, the lugubrious drama was practically dead—yet Irving managed to make the part interesting. The grief of the character, said Clement Scott, was "never maudlin; his despair never verged into irritability; but there was a world of sorrow in his expressive eyes, a stamp of destiny in his calm, white features. We here saw the affection of the father that penetrated into the sad man's very soul and had become part of his. Every delicacy in this gradation of sorrow was delicately touched: the pride at the boy's physical beauty, the delight at welcoming him to his side, the absolute sympathy with him before the murder, the sudden, swift antipathy after it, the on-creeping terror of the truth, the shock, the surprise, and then the only possible end of such a life—a broken heart."

At the conclusion of the play, the veteran dramatist [1] ap-

[1] Westland Marston (1819-90), the writer of many excellent plays including "The Patrician's Daughter," 1841, "Strathmore," 1849, "Marie de Méranie," 1850, "A Hard Struggle," 1858, "Donna Diana," 1863. In his "Recollections of Our Recent Actors" (1888), Dr. Marston said: "Mr. Macready was succeeded in his great performance of Werner by Mr. Phelps, who played the character with considerable effect during his management of Sadler's Wells. Since then, Werner remained unrepresented by any

peared before the curtain and thanked the audience in a pathetic little speech. After paying a heartfelt tribute to the generosity of the Lyceum manager, Dr. Marston observed that, half a century before that afternoon, he had been connected with Macready—"the greatest actor in the days of my youth"—and that he was finishing his career with the help of "the greatest actor of my declining years". After Dr. Marston had retired, the audience insisted upon "a few words from Mr. Irving, who regretted that 'Werner' could not be played again, and expressed his thanks to one and all for their cordial co-operation and support. Mr. Irving would, however, be well advised to produce 'Werner' in America during his forthcoming tour." This advice was not taken, and Irving, true to his decision, never acted "Werner" again. He gave the entire receipts of the house to the old dramatist, who thus benefited by £929 12s. It has never transpired until now that Henry Irving defrayed all the expenses of the production—£1184 12s. 3d.

Two days later—that is to say, on Friday evening, 3rd June, when "Faust" was acted for the 383rd time—he gave the whole of the receipts, £419, to the sufferers through the destruction of the Opera Comique, Paris—an act of prompt and deep kindness which endeared him to many of the French people. On Thursday afternoon, 9th June, he played "Louis XI." for the benefit of the Actors' Benevolent Fund, and,

adequate actor until it was revived by Mr. Henry Irving for the benefit of the present writer, with a sympathetic generosity that has scarcely a parallel in theatrical annals." Macready, in spite of Byron's protestation that the play was not meant for the stage, produced it, first in the country, and then, on 15th November, 1830, at Drury Lane. He was very successful in portraying what Bulwer Lytton called "the human debasement" of Werner. It was in this play that his self-esteem received a severe blow, which he himself records with some humour. A young actor who was playing Ulric one night annoyed the star by persistently declining to look him in the face. Presently, however, Macready observed that tears were coursing down Ulric's cheek, whereupon he says, "I continued the scene with augmented energy and feeling, and left it with a very favourable impression of the young man's judgment and warm-heartedness". What was his disgust then, when the representative of Ulric came up to him between the acts and apologised for his inattention on the ground that some paint had got into his eyes and kept them painfully watering!

a week later, he again lent his theatre and acted Shylock in the Trial scene from "The Merchant of Venice," for the benefit of Miss Amy Roselle—an actress who came to a tragic end, some years later, in Australia—who was the richer, thanks to the Lyceum performance, by £339.

On the afternoon of 7th June, he brought out a poetical little play, in three acts, by Mr. Alfred C. Calmour, entitled "The Amber Heart," a slight but charming piece in which Miss Ellen Terry as the heroine, Ellaline, was delightful. Irving did not appear in it, but, as will be seen, he engaged a remarkably good company for this special performance, and, at the conclusion of the "poetical fancy," as Mr. Calmour called it, he presented Miss Terry with the acting rights of the piece. Towards the close of the season, he revived various plays which, in addition to "Faust," formed the repertory for his next tour of the United States. Thus, during May, June, and July, there were sixteen representations of "The Bells" and "Jingle," five of "Olivia," nine of "Much Ado About Nothing," ten of "Louis XI." and fourteen of "The Merchant of Venice". It was with the last play that, on 16th July, the season terminated. The programme for Saturday, 2nd July, is an interesting document. It states that "By desire of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, at 8.30, will be presented 'Olivia'". He had several serious projects in his mind, as is shown by his production account, which shows payments for "Henry VIII.," "Richard II.," and "King Arthur" (£450). He was in the flood time of success, and his speech on the last night of this long and eventful season was the essence of good humour and graciousness. "Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "I hardly know what to say or how to thank you for your kindness to-night, or for the cordial support which you have given to us during the season that has just ended. I fear that I have little to say of interest, though much of gratitude, and only thanks and thanks, and ever thanks. It is not even possible to confess that 'Faust' has been a failure. We produced it in '85, and, as far as I know, we shall be playing it in '88. This may be called the devil's own luck, though, I pre-

fer to think, 'needs must when the devil drives'. A terrible fear got abroad some little while ago that these long runs might ultimately lead to madness, and though I had always fancied that short runs were more likely to develop that malady, to allay such despondent apprehensions I took refuge in a change of bill, and I am glad to say with eminently satisfactory results. The interest in 'Faust,' ladies and gentlemen, has not been confined to England, or even to England and America, for we have had invitations to represent it in many European capitals; and there is one feature in this success which must be specially gratifying to all real lovers of Goethe, that our play has been the means of multiplying his readers in England by hundreds of thousands, the sale of the various translations of 'Faust' having been extraordinary. I don't know that the devil ever expected to be instrumental in the revival of trade,

THE AMBER HEART.

First acted at the Lyceum, 7th June, 1887.

Silvio - - - - -	Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree.
Geoffrey - - - - -	Mr. Frank Tyars.
Ranulf - - - - -	Mr. Allen Beaumont.
Sir Simon Gamba - - -	Mr. Henry Kemble.
Coranto - - - - -	Mr. E. S. Willard.
Mirabelle - - - -	Miss Cissy Grahame.
Cesta - - - - -	Miss Helen Forsyth.
Katrona - - - - -	Miss M. A. Giffard.
Ellaline - - - -	Miss Ellen Terry.

but the many forms of honest industry which he has been the means of stimulating are really quite bewildering. Only think of the Mephistopheles hat, and the Margaret shoe, and the hundred and one articles which have borne the image of the Spirit that Denies. Believe me, I have had nothing to do with these devices. I don't get a commission on any of them! Ladies and gentlemen, in these deep and dark designs, I have had no hand whatever.

"You may have learned, ladies and gentlemen, from the back of our programme, that, after appearing in Edinburgh, in Glasgow, in Manchester, and in Liverpool, we shall pay our third visit to America. Our American cousins have expressed

a cordial wish to see us again, and I am very glad that it is in our power to gratify their most flattering and kindly desire. You too, perhaps, will be glad to be rid of us for a time; at least, I hope you will be glad to see us back again. On Monday, Madame Sarah Bernhardt will be enthusiastically welcomed to these boards, and then Miss Mary Anderson (to whom I wish the most complete success) will commence her third season here. And now, ladies and gentlemen, the little that I had to say, is said, and I wish that I could express to you, as representatives of the public, the stimulus which your unflagging support has ever given to our work. In saying this I speak for Miss Terry as much as for myself—our gratitude cannot be measured by mere words—and on her behalf, and on behalf of one and all, I thank you again and again, and I hope that when we return we shall receive that genuine and hearty welcome which you have ever accorded to your faithful and devoted servants."

Thus terminated one of the most glorious chapters in the history of Henry Irving. But another one, of equal success, was about to begin. He played for two weeks in each of the places mentioned in the speech just quoted, "Faust" being the great attraction. The tour began on 22nd August and ended on 15th October. During that time there was the usual round of luncheons, suppers, and speeches. At one function, he related an amusing experience. "I received an unexpected blow the other day at a Highland station. The stationmaster, a most obliging and kindly gentleman, suddenly grasped my hand, exclaiming 'Irving, man, I hope to see you some day on the same platform with Stephen Blackwood'. I confess I was taken a little by surprise, and I said, 'Well, I hope so too'. Then I recovered my self-possession, and bethought me that Mr. Stephen Blackwood must be a popular and excellent preacher, and my conjecture was right, so in I plunged boldly. 'My friend,' said I, 'we are all on the same platform. You look after the trains and take care of the passengers, Mr. Stephen Blackwood labels them for their ultimate destination, and I do my best to amuse and entertain

them upon their journey; so you see, my friend, we all do our best, and if we do strive to do our duty we work for the same end, and no one really has a monopoly.'"

At a banquet given to him on 15th September, by the Glasgow Pen and Pencil Club, he was in great good humour. Replying to the toast of his health, he said that he had been reminded by the cordiality of his reception of the gathering in that room four years previously. Since then he had travelled far, but he had never been able to escape from the impression that for a capacity to plant themselves everywhere and flourish as the fruitful vine, the Glasgow pens and pencils could not be surpassed. In the matter of compliments, he had received, within the last few days, two private tributes which made him a little fastidious. One was from a critic, who told him that he could not act Mephistopheles because he was too good; unless he really made a journey elsewhere and saw the devil he could not possibly know what he was like; but it was considerately suggested such a journey would not be worth while, for the present at least, that personage's personal peculiarities not being suited to his own elegant manner—though upon this point there appeared to be some difference of opinion among excellent critics. A second correspondent challenged him to move a pin by magic art, and unless he could do that, refused to recognise him as a kindred spirit. But if Mephistopheles could not move a pin, he sometimes succeeded in moving an audience. The remainder of his speech was an eloquent dissertation on one of his favourite themes—Shakespeare the player and playwright. During his visit to Manchester, beginning on 24th September, he was entertained by the Brasenose Club and by the Arts Club.

The provincial tour closed on the Saturday night, and, on the next day, 16th October, Irving travelled from Liverpool to Stratford-on-Avon, in order to be present at the dedication of a handsome drinking fountain which had been presented to the town by Mr. G. W. Childs, of Philadelphia. He was received at the railway station by a crowd of enthusiastic townsfolk, and although other celebrities were present, the

famous actor was the hero of the hour. Shortly before noon, on the Monday, a procession was formed at the Town Hall, headed by Sir Arthur Hodgson, the then Mayor of Stratford, preceded by the beadle and mace-bearers of the ancient corporation, and followed by the mayors of neighbouring towns, Mr. Phelps, the American Minister, Sir Theodore Martin, Lord Ronald Gower, Sir F. P. Cunliffe Owen, Henry Irving and his friend, Mr. J. C. Parkinson, Mr. John Walter, the vicar of Stratford, the Rev. de Courcy Laffan, and the ministers of every religious denomination of the town. The gift of Mr. Childs, a combination of drinking-trough and clock tower, a handsome monument in grey stone, stands in the centre of the old Rothermarket. Henry Irving, who was elected to address the assemblage at the initiation ceremony, stood bare-headed as he recited some verses which had been specially written for the occasion by Oliver Wendell Holmes. When the applause which followed had ceased, he addressed the people thus: "The occasion which has drawn us here to-day has an exceptional interest and a special significance. We have met to celebrate a tribute which has been paid to the memory of Shakespeare by an American citizen, and which is associated with the Jubilee year of our Queen. The donor of this beautiful monument I am happy to claim as a personal friend. Mr. G. W. Childs is not only an admirable representative of the public spirit and enterprising energy of Philadelphia, but he is also a man who has endeared himself to a very wide circle by many generous deeds. I do not wonder at his munificence, for to men like him it is a second nature; but I rejoice in the happy inspiration which prompted a gift that so worthily represents the common homage of two great peoples to the most famous man of their common race. On this spot of all others, Americans cease to be aliens, for here they claim our kinship with the great master of English speech. It is not for me to say how responsive American life and literature are to the influence which has done more than the work of any other man to mould the thought and character of generations. The simplest

records of Stratford show that this is the Mecca of American pilgrims, and that the place which gave birth to Shakespeare is regarded as the fountain of the mightiest and most enduring inspiration of our mother tongue. It is not difficult to believe that amongst the strangers who write those imposing letters 'U.S.A.' in the visitors' book in the historic house hard by, there are some whose colloquial speech still preserves phrases which have come down from Shakespeare's time. Some idioms which are supposed to be racy of American invention can be traced back to Shakespeare. And we can imagine that in the audience at the old Globe Theatre there were ignorant and unlettered men who treasured up something of Shakespeare's imagery and vivid portraiture, and carried with them over the ocean thoughts and words, 'solemn vision and bright silver dream,' which helped to nurture their transplanted stock.

"It is above all things as the poet of the people that Shakespeare is supreme. He wrote in days when literature made no appeal to the multitude. Books were for a limited class, but the theatre was open to all. How many Englishmen, to whom reading was a labour or an impossibility, must have drawn from the Stage which Shakespeare had enriched some of the most priceless jewels of the human mind! One of the inscriptions on this fountain is the most expressive tribute to Shakespeare which the people's heart can pay. 'Ten thousand honours and blessings on the bard who has gilded the dull realities of life with innocent illusions'. Those simple words speak a gratitude far more eloquent and enduring than whole libraries of criticism. It is not only because Shakespeare is the delight of scholars, or because he has infinite charms for the most refined taste, that he wields the unbroken staff of Prospero over the imagination of mankind. It is because his spell is woven from the truth and simplicity of Nature herself. This after all is the heart of the mystery. Without an effort, the simplest mind passes into the realms of Shakespeare's fancy. We may be awed by thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls, but that is when they are on the confines of the everlasting. Learned and simple, gentle and humble, all may

drink from the inexhaustible wisdom of this supreme sage. And so it seems to me that no happier emblem of Shakespeare's genius in his native place could have been chosen than this memorial fountain. I suppose we shall never be content with what little we know of Shakespeare's personal history. Yet we can see him in his home-life here, the man of genial manners and persuasive speech, unassuming and serene, and perhaps unconscious that he had created in the history of letters as great a marvel as his contemporary Galileo's discovery in the world of science. And we may conjure other fancies. We can picture Shakespeare returning from his bourne to find upon the throne a Queen who rules with gentler sway than the great Sovereign that he knew, and yet whose reign has glories more beneficent than those of Elizabeth. We can try to imagine his emotion when he finds 'this dear England' he loved so well expanded beyond the seas; and we can at least be happy in the thought that when he had mastered the lessons of the conflict which divided us from our kinsmen in America, he would be proud to see in Stratford the gift of a distinguished American citizen—this memorial of our reunion under the shadow of his undying name."

Irving, who, by the way, had recently been elected a trustee of Shakespeare's house, was, in the interval between the ceremony of inauguration and the luncheon at the Town Hall, escorted to Shakespeare's house by his fellow trustee, Mr. Samuel Timmins. The proceedings at the luncheon were commendably brief. Henry Irving, in returning thanks for the toast of his own health, proposed by his host, Mr. Charles Flower, said: "I am very sensible of the kindness which has prompted this toast, and I should be less than human if I were not grateful for the flattering words which we have just heard; but an actor can crave no higher distinction than that of being prominently associated with some public work in connection with Shakespeare's memory in Shakespeare's native town. It is the lasting honour of the actor's calling that the Poet of all Time was a player, and that he

achieved immortality by writing for the stage. Of all the eloquent tributes which have been paid to Shakespeare, one ever recalls the words of his fellow-actors, to whose loving care we owe the first edition of his works, and who tell us that 'as he was a happy imitator of nature, he was a most gentle expresser of it'. All we can desire in the artistic embodiment of life this 'most gentle expresser' of nature has given us. As Emerson says: 'We can discern, by his ample pictures of the gentleman and the king, what forms and humanities pleased him; his delight in troops of friends, in large hospitality, in cheerful giving. Let Timon, let Warwick, let Antonio the merchant answer for his great heart. So far from Shakespeare being the least known, he is the one person in all modern history known to us. What point of morals, of manners, of economy, of philosophy, of religion, of taste, of the conduct of life has he not settled? What mystery has he not signified his knowledge of? What offices, or functions, or district of man's work has he not remembered? What king has he not taught states, as Talma taught Napoleon? What maiden has not found him finer than her delicacy? What lover has he not outloved? What sage has he not outseen? What gentleman has he not instructed in the rudeness of his behaviour?' These are things which the actor treasures to the full as dearly as the student. The actor's art to-day comes much nearer Shakespeare's estimate of its importance in the intellectual life of the community than in the times when the Corporation of Stratford refused to permit the performance even of his own plays. I hope that reminder touches no tender spot in your municipal pride. The players were not treated with contumely in Stratford, and perhaps it was the influence of Shakespeare's memory which induced the Corporation on one occasion to pay them the handsome sum of forty shillings to go away. But I think we can do better now in your Memorial Theatre; and when our occupation's gone elsewhere we can settle down here under the wing of the worshipful mayor. Ladies and gentlemen, in a few days I shall sail for the great country where any worthy representation

of Shakespeare on the stage commands as staunch support from the public as in our own land. I shall carry, as your ambassador to Mr. Childs, your enthusiastic appreciation of his generous gift. To-day's ceremonial has given infinite pleasure to all, for it has renewed our hallowed associations with the mighty dead, and it has reminded two great nations of a bond which no calamity can dissolve. And, believe me, it will make every actor in the world-wide sphere of Shakespeare's influence prouder than ever of the calling which I have the privilege of representing here."

CHAPTER VIII.

November, 1887—December, 1888.

The third American tour—Only four cities visited—"Faust" the great attraction—Reception by the Goethe Society of New York—Irving on Goethe as a theatre manager—Performance at West Point—"The Merchant of Venice" without scenery—Advice to the cadets—An American criticism on Irving's Mephistopheles—"Henry Irving is one of the greatest actors that have ever lived"—The financial result—Irving's twelfth season as manager of the Lyceum—"Faust" played for the 508th time—Its 428th representation at the Lyceum—A dinner-party at the Grange—A provincial tour—Mr. Mansfield's indebtedness—"The Henry Irving Shakespeare"—Irving on Shakespeare the play-wright—An affectionate letter.

Irving left for London immediately after the luncheon, and, three days later, on Thursday, 20th October, he embarked from Liverpool on his third tour of America. This lasted from 7th November, 1887, to 24th March, 1888, and, so carefully was it arranged, only four cities were visited. "Faust" was the great attraction, and enormous receipts resulted from the enterprise. There were, of course, many social functions to be attended, but, as "Faust" was played so frequently, and as there were only four railway journeys—and these easy ones, for America—during the twenty weeks, Irving's third visit to the United States was by far the least arduous that he ever paid there. Still, it was diversified by some unusual circumstances—thus, on the afternoon of 15th February, at the Huntington Hall, Boston, Irving gave an entertainment to which he contributed five out of the six items of the programme: Gemini et Virgo (Calverley), Hamlet's Speech to the Players, the Feast of Belshazzar, David Copperfield and the Waiter, and the Edmund Kean part of his Oxford lecture. Miss Ellen Terry was responsible for Portia's first scene from "The Merchant of Venice".

During the second visit of this tour to New York—in which city, in the course of his career, Irving acted for fifty-seven weeks—there were two events of note. On 15th March, 1888, Irving was the guest of the Goethe Society of New York. The function took place in the Madison Square Theatre, and, after the actor had been welcomed by Mr. Parke Godwin, the president, and the other members of the club, he delivered an address on Goethe as a theatre manager, in the course of which he alluded to his own mode of production. "I do not," he said, "presume to maintain that any method of representation, however admirable, can be fully adequate to the portrayal of Shakespeare, nor do I concern myself very much with the familiar reproach of overlaying our greatest dramatist with ornament. I have before said that the value of the aids and adjuncts of scenery and costume has ceased to be a matter of opinion: these have become necessary. They are dictated by the public taste of the day, and not by the desire for mere scenic display. To this, of course, there are limits; mere pageant, apart from the story, has no place, although there may be a succession of truthful, harmonious pictures, which shall neither hamper the natural action nor distract the judgment from the actor's art. Shakespeare commands the homage of all the arts, and their utmost capacity, when rightly directed, can do no more than pay tribute to his splendour: the splendour of the master of our mother-tongue, the most completely equipped of all the literary men who wrote. More than this, he had the most intimate and varied knowledge of the stage, and that is why his work is the actor's greatest pride and most exacting trial. To play Shakespeare with any measure of success, it is necessary that the actor shall, above all things, be a student of character. To touch the springs of motive, to seize all the shades of expression, to feel yourself at the root and foundation of the being you are striving to represent—in a word, to impersonate the characters of Shakespeare—this is a task which demands the most exacting discipline, the widest command of the means of illustration. Of all the triumphs of the stage, there is none so exalting as that

of a representation of Shakespeare, which gives to the great mass of playgoers a strong and truthful impression of his work, and a suggestion of the ideal which his exponents are honourably struggling to attain".

The most interesting episode of this tour was, perhaps, the representation of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Military Academy of West Point on 19th March. For there was no scenery whatever. The entire company appeared, and the costumes were worn, but the various scenes were indicated in true Elizabethan style by a placard, which was let down from the inside of the proscenium of the Grant Hall, bearing the words, "This is a street in Venice," and so forth. The performance was received with the greatest enthusiasm imaginable, even with an audience which consisted, for the most part, of military cadets. At the conclusion, Irving was obliged to say

THE THIRD AMERICAN TOUR.

7th November, 1887—24th March, 1888.

7th Nov. to 10th Dec.	New York *	Five weeks
12th Dec. to 23rd Dec.	Philadelphia	Two weeks
25th Dec. to 21st Jan.	Chicago	Four weeks
23rd Jan. to 18th Feb.	Boston	Four weeks
20th Feb. to 24th March	New York *	Five weeks

* Star Theatre, Union Square.

a few words: "You cannot know the great pleasure it has been to be here to-night, to see your faces, and to hear the cheery tones of your voices. There is no doubt at all in my mind that the lungs of the students of West Point are in a most healthy condition. I should like to say to you—if I can do so without presumption—what David Garrick said: 'Always keep your Shakespeare about you'. The more you read it, the more you will like it. Perhaps Shakespeare wrote the wisest book ever written, except one. I cannot refrain a little patriotic pride now, and I will confess it. I believe the joy bells are ringing in London to-night because, for the first time, the British have captured West Point!"

One of the most gratifying features of this tour was the constant and discriminating praise of the press. It may,

indeed, without exaggeration, be described as lavish. It was absolutely unqualified, and, as there was no need to study patriotic prejudices—for nothing like "Faust," either in acting or as a production, had ever been seen in America—there was no opportunity for invidious comparison. The scenic wonders were received with admiration, and the beauty of Miss Ellen Terry's Margaret enlisted the sympathy of every spectator of this charming performance. We are, however, more directly concerned with the artistic achievement of Henry Irving in this play. We have already seen how his impersonation of Mephistopheles impressed one of the leading English critics. It may, therefore, be instructive to set down the opinion of America's foremost critic of the drama. In this case, as in that of the former, the essay is too long to be printed in full, so that we must confine ourselves to those passages dealing with the salient points of Irving's impersonation :—

"Henry Irving, in his embodiment of Mephistopheles, fulfilled the conception of the poet in one essential respect and transcended it in another. His performance, superb in ideal and perfect in execution, was a great work—and precisely here was the greatness of it: Mephistopheles as delineated by Goethe is magnificently intellectual and sardonic, but nowhere does he convey even a faint suggestion of the godhead of glory from which he has lapsed. His own frank and clear avowal of himself leaves no room for doubt as to the limitation intended to be established for him by the poet. I am, he declares, the spirit that perpetually denies. I am part of that part which once was all—a part of that darkness out of which came the light. I repudiate all things—because everything that has been made is unworthy to exist and ought to be destroyed, and therefore it is better that nothing should ever have been made. God dwells in splendour, alone and eternal, but His spirits He thrusts into darkness, and man, a poor creature fashioned to poke his nose into filth, He sportively dowers with day and night. My province is evil; my existence is mockery; my pleasure and my purpose are destruction. In a word, this Fiend, towering to the loftiest summit of cold intellect, is the

embodiment of cruelty, malice, and scorn, pervaded and interfused with grim humour. That ideal Mr. Irving made actual. The omniscient craft and deadly malignity of his impersonation, swathed in a most specious humour at some moments (as, for example, in Margaret's bedroom, in the garden scene with Martha, and in the duel scene with Valentine) made the blood creep and curdle with horror, even while they impressed the sense of intellectual power and stirred the springs of laughter. But if you rightly saw his face, in the fantastic, symbolical scene of the Witches' Kitchen; in that lurid moment of sunset over the quaint gables and haunted spires of Nuremburg, when the sinister presence of the arch-fiend deepened the red glare of the setting sun and seemed to bathe this world in the ominous splendour of hell; and, above all, if you perceived the soul that shone through his eyes in that supremely awful moment of his predominance over the hellish revel upon the Brocken, when all the hideous malignities of nature and all those baleful 'spirits which tend on mortal consequence' are loosed into aerial abyss, and only this imperial horror can curb and subdue them, you knew that this Mephistopheles was a sufferer not less than a mocker; that his colossal malignity was the delirium of an angelic spirit thwarted, baffled, shattered, yet defiant; never to be vanquished; never through all eternity to be at peace with itself. The infinite sadness of that face, the pathos, beyond words, of that isolated and lonely figure—those are the qualities that irradiated all its diversified attributes of mind, humour, duplicity, sarcasm, force, horror, and infernal beauty, and invested it with the authentic quality of greatness. There is no warrant for this treatment of the part to be derived from Goethe's poem. There is every warrant for it in the apprehension of this tremendous subject by the imagination of a great actor. You cannot mount above the earth, you cannot transcend the ordinary line of the commonplace, as a mere sardonic image of self-satisfied, chuckling obliquity. Mr. Irving embodied Mephistopheles not as a man but as a spirit with all that the word implies. And in doing that he not only heeded the fine instinct of the

true actor but the splendid teaching of the highest poetry—the ray of supernal light that flashes from the old Hebrew Bible; the blaze that streams from the 'Paradise Lost'; the awful glory through which, in the pages of Byron, the typical figure of agonised but unconquerable revolt towers over a realm of ruin:—

> On his brow
> The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye
> Glares forth the immortality of hell."

Mr. Winter concluded his essay with a summary of the general position as an actor to which Irving had then attained, which, coming from one who was the intimate personal friend of the still-living Edwin Booth, was all the greater in value:—

"Mr. Irving is the legitimate successor to Macready and he has encountered the same peril. There are persons—many of them—who think that it is a sign of weakness to praise cordially and to utter admiration with a free heart. They are mistaken, but no doubt they are sincere. Shakespeare, the wisest of monitors, is never so eloquent and splendid as when he makes one of his people express praise of another. Look at those speeches in 'Coriolanus'. Such niggardly persons, in their detraction of Henry Irving, are prompt to declare that he is a capital stage manager but not a great actor. This has an impartial air and a sapient sound, but it is gross folly and injustice. Henry Irving is one of the greatest actors that have ever lived, and he has shown it over and over again. His acting is all the more effective because associated with unmatched ability to insist and insure that every play shall be perfectly well set, in every particular, and that every part in it shall be competently acted. But his genius and his ability are no more discredited than those of Macready were by his attention to technical detail and his insistence upon total excellence of result. It should be observed, however, that he has carried stage garniture to an extreme limit. His investiture of 'Faust' was so magnificent that possibly it may have tended, in the minds of many spectators, to obscure and overwhelm the fine intellectual force, the beautiful delicacy, and the consummate art with which he embodied Mephistopheles. It

ought not to have produced that effect—because, in fact, the spectacle presented was, actually and truly, that of a supernatural being, predominant by force of inherent strength and charm over the broad expanse of the populous and teeming world; but it might have produced it: and, for the practical good of the art of acting, progress in that direction has gone far enough. The supreme beauty of the production was the poetic atmosphere of it—the irradiation of that strange sensation of being haunted which sometimes will come upon you, even at noon-day, in lonely places, on a vacant hill-side, beneath the dark boughs of great trees, in the presence of the grim and silent rocks, and by the solitary margin of the sea. The feeling was that of Goethe's own weird and suggestive scene of the Open Field, the black horses, and the raven-stone; or that of the shuddering lines of Coleridge:—

> As one that on a lonesome road
> Doth walk in fear and dread,
> And having once turned round, walks on
> And turns no more his head,
> Because he knows a frightful fiend
> Doth close behind him tread."

With the echoes of this generous tribute to his merit and his achievement ringing in his ears, the grateful actor started on his sixth journey across the Atlantic. The tour now closed was the shortest of Irving's visits to America—it occupied only twenty weeks. The average receipts per week were £3,596 19s. 6d., the average weekly profit—despite huge expenses—being £596 14s. 3d. Among the company at this time was Miss Winifred Emery, who, as she estimates, played Margaret for five weeks in London and America.

"Faust,"[1] which was then played for the five hundred and

[1] During Henry Irving's absence on his third American tour, the Lyceum was again occupied by Miss Mary Anderson, who produced on 10th September, 1887, "The Winter's Tale". The revival was a great success. It lasted until 24th March, 1888, when the hundred and sixty-sixth representation was given. Miss Anderson "doubled" the parts of Hermione and Perdita. On 2nd April, Miss Geneviève Ward opened in "Forget-Me-Not," and, on the 7th, she produced a new play there.

eighth time, was selected for the commencement, on 14th April, 1888, of Irving's twelfth season as manager of the Lyceum. "After a long absence," he said, in a brief speech at the end of the play, "we are more than glad to find ourselves among you once more, and we are deeply grateful for the hearty welcome, which is not an unfamiliar sound under this roof." The welcome was, indeed, an enthusiastic one from a representative gathering of the artistic and literary world of London. The Mephistopheles and the Margaret of the occasion were able to "derive new inspiration from such a gathering of old and valued friends," and they certainly seemed all the better for a tour which had been, in a comparative sense, a holiday. There were some slight changes in the cast. Mr. Alexander was still the Faust, but the Martha was Mrs. Chippendale—who had played the part in America—an experienced actress who represented the character on somewhat broader lines than her predecessor, Mrs. Stirling. Towards the end of May, a change of bill was necessary, for "Faust" had then been acted at the Lyceum for four hundred and twenty-eight times. On 23rd May, "The Amber Heart" and "Robert Macaire" formed the programme. In the former piece, Miss Ellen Terry resumed her original character, but Mr. Alexander was now the Silvio, Mr. Hermann Vezin the Coranto, and there were other changes in the cast. Irving, it will be remembered, had first played "Robert Macaire" in London twenty-one years previously. And, in 1883, for the benefit of the Royal College of Music, he had acted Lemaître's old character. So that there was no novelty in his assumption of the rôle in 1888. Nor did the rough and tumble nature of the melodrama gain from the inevitable comparison with the poetical play which it followed in the programme. This double bill was alternated with "Faust" until the last night of the season, 7th July, when Irving announced that, in December, he would revive "Macbeth," and that the representation of the tragedy would be assisted by the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan.

Irving also stated that on his coming tour of the provinces Miss Marion Terry would play her sister's part of Margaret

in "Faust," and that Miss Ellen Terry would take a long and well-deserved holiday. On the next evening, he gave a dinner party at The Grange, Brook Green, Hammersmith, an old-fashioned country house—long since displaced by new buildings—which he had taken by way of obtaining a quiet residence in the fresh air. In those ante-motor days, Brook Green was, strange as it may seem, too far from the centre of London for the actor, and he soon relinquished the property, at a considerable loss. He had many pleasant gatherings there in the summertime. On the occasion just noted, Sunday, 8th July, his guests included Mrs. Charles Mathews and Mrs. G. H.

THE GRANGE, BROOK GREEN, HAMMERSMITH.
FOR SOME YEARS THE "SUMMER" RESIDENCE OF HENRY IRVING.

Gilbert—two veteran actresses, one English, the other American—two other American players of note, Miss Ada Rehan and James Lewis, Miss Ellen Terry and Miss Marion Terry, J. L. Toole, Mr. Mortimer Menpes, and two dramatic critics, Mr. Winter, who was then visiting England, and the late Joseph Knight. The latter gentleman, in an "appreciation," written after Irving's death, gave an interesting description of this dinner party at The Grange: "At the period when the Augustin Daly company first came over to London and Miss

Ada Rehan captured all hearts by her talent, Irving determined to bring together at dinner the principal members of his own company and of that which then first visited England. He had possession at that time of a charming house and garden in Brook Green. For a certain Sunday, accordingly, the coveted guests were bidden thither, together with a few sympathisers with the drama, of whom I was a favoured unit. Three rooms on the first floor were converted into one, the partitions were levelled, and the whole was carefully, elaborately, and artistically decorated, not without a special view to the costumes of certain favoured artists who were expected. Meeting Irving two or three days before, I said to him 'How shall I arrange for getting home from Brook Green on a Monday morning?' 'That will be all right,' said he. 'Cabs will be told to come at one o'clock.' At that hour, accordingly, a carriage and pair of horses came for every guest or party, and I had the privilege of being driven along a route of some miles in a vehicle ill-befitting my fortunes, the driver of which refused to take the extra honorarium I endeavoured to fasten on him. Trivial and inadequate are such records, but they are characteristic.' On the following evening, Irving gave a supper at the Lyceum—in the Beefsteak rooms—to Sarah Bernhardt, the other guests including Mdme. Bernhardt's husband, M. Damala, Miss Ada Rehan, Miss Ellen Terry, Mr. John Drew, Mr. G. W. Smalley, and the late Hamilton Aïdé. These were, indeed, golden nights.

His provincial tour began on 10th September, and ended on 1st December. On the former date, "Faust" was presented at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, with Miss Marion Terry as Margaret. Edinburgh, Manchester (three weeks), Nottingham, Leeds, and Birmingham were visited in turn. Forty-three representations of "Faust" were given, eight of "Louis XI.," fourteen of "The Bells" and "Robert Macaire," and seven of "The Lyons Mail". On 17th October, he travelled from Manchester to Bolton, where he laid the commemoration stone of the Theatre Royal and was entertained to luncheon in the Town Hall.

During July, the Lyceum was occupied by Sarah Bernhardt. On 4th August, Richard Mansfield began a season with "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde". "A Parisian Romance" followed, and, from 19th October until the termination of his season in December, "Prince Karl" was acted. A statement in red ink in the Lyceum ledger tells its own story of this season and of Irving's generosity :—

Note.
£1675 left owing by Mr. Mansfield for rent.
also 1000 Loan

£2675

1894.	Recv'd loan and interest	£1180 16 8
1896.	Recv'd rent and interest less law fees	1476 14 10
		£2657 11 6

To this period of Irving's life there belongs a work of which little has been said in any previous biography. Yet "The Henry Irving Shakespeare" is an edition of the dramatist which involved an enormous amount of expenditure of time which could be spared, only by a sacrifice of rest, from the laborious efforts in connection with the stage. For Henry Irving did much more than merely lend his name to the enterprise of the publishers. He was at vast pains to make certain excisions in the text which are of the greatest help as a guide to the stage-manager. He did not emulate some other Shakespearean editors and boldly cut out passages which were not to his liking, but contented himself by indicating those passages which might be omitted either in the recitation or representation of the plays. He devoted many long hours and all his intelligence to this laborious task. In conjunction with Mr. Frank Marshall, he shared the position of editor. The first of the original eight volumes was issued in 1888, containing a general introduction by Mr. Marshall dated November, 1887, and an essay by Irving entitled "Shakespeare as a Playwright," in which he insisted upon the fact that Shakespeare wrote for the stage. "I daresay," he began,

"that it will appear to some readers a profanation of the name of Shakespeare to couple with it the title of playwright. But I have chosen this title for my introduction because I am anxious to show that with the mighty genius of the poet was united, in a remarkable degree, the capacity for writing plays intended to be acted as well as read. One often finds that the very persons who claim most to reverence Shakespeare, not only as a poet but also as a dramatist, carry that reverence to such an extent that they would almost forbid the representation of his plays upon the stage, except under conditions which are, if not impossible, certainly impracticable." He argued his point most admirably, and concluded with a plea for the proper adornment of the poet's work: "Much objection has been made to the employment of the sister arts of music and painting in the stage representation of Shakespeare, and to the elaborate illustrations of the countries in which the various scenes are laid, or of the dress and surroundings of the different characters. I do not contend that a play, fairly acted, cannot be fully effective without any of these aids and adjuncts. But, practically, their value has ceased to be a matter of opinion; they have become necessary. They are dictated by the public taste of the day—not by the desire for mere scenic display, but that demand for finish in details which has grown with the development of art in all its phases. A painter who should neglect truthful detail, however broad and powerful his method, would nowadays be exposed to severe criticism. This is not a proof of decadence; it is a striving after completeness. The stage has become not only a mirror of the passions, but also a nursery of the arts, for here students of the past learn the form and colour of the costumes and the decorations of distant ages. To all this there are clear limits. It is not always possible to reproduce an historic period with exactness. 'Macbeth,' and 'Lear,' and 'Hamlet' belong to history too remote for fidelity of costume. But a period has, in such cases, to be chosen and followed with conscientious thoroughness, tempered by discrimination. Above all, the resources of the picturesque must

be wholly subordinate to the play. Mere pageant apart from the story has no place in Shakespeare, although there may be a succession of truthful and harmonious pictures which shall neither hamper the natural action nor distract the judgment from the actor's art. In fine, there is no occasion to apologise for the system of decoration. True criticism begins when the manager carries ornament to excess, for then he sins against the laws of beauty as well as against the poet. Tried by this standard, a successful representation of a Shakespeare play may be ranked as a worthy tribute to the genius which commands the homage of all art, and which has laid on us the memorable injunction of 'an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine'."

Three other volumes of "The Henry Irving Shakespeare" were also published in 1888, the fifth and sixth being issued in 1889. Irving's co-editor dated his preface to the latter volume in June, and, in the course of it, he alluded to his failing health, in consequence of which he had been obliged to call in the assistance of Mr. Joseph Knight, Mr. Wilson Verity, Mr. Arthur Symons, and other Shakespearean scholars. His note to the seventh volume is dated in December of that year and contains a pathetic reference to his continued illness: "I may be forgiven if I refer for a moment to myself. I cannot pass this opportunity of thanking the countless friends, who, from all quarters of the world, have, during the last few months, wished me God-speed towards recovery. Most of them are perfect strangers to me, but for their kindly expressed wishes for my renewed health, I thank them from the bottom of my heart." These were the last words which he wrote for "The Henry Irving Shakespeare". He died on 28th December, 1889, at the age of forty-nine, and the eighth volume, issued in 1890, was completed by other hands.

At the time of Irving's death, writers, who did not know the man, alluded to his loneliness. It is true, he was a lonely man, but he had certain deep friendships which made up to him for much else that he had missed in his life. It must not be supposed, as has been stated, that he lived as a being apart

from other mortals. To those for whom he did not care, he was impenetrable. But for some others, he had a heart which over-flowed with tenderness. What could be more touching in its way than the following letter of comfort which, overworked as he himself was, he found time to write to his dying comrade? It is dated the 18th November, 1889:—

"The happiest returns of the day, my dear old Frank, and may God keep green and preserve to us for many, many years that loving and affectionate heart of yours.

"We must gather together soon—but let it be on a Sunday—for I've really a thousand and one things to get through day by day—(at present, Committees, Funds, County Councils, and the Devil knows what all). I get tired out by the middle of the day and must rest to get through my work at all, with effort.

"If I can look in and see you to-day, I shall—I'm just going out, and can not get back till 3 or 4 o'clock at the earliest.

"I'm all right again now—but last week was very seedy.

"God bless you, my dear friend,

"Ever affectionately yours,

"HENRY IRVING."

And Henry Irving, in his Prefatory Note to the final volume of the Shakespeare which had been called after him, paid this beautiful tribute to his faithful friend: "To those who remain of the staff who undertook and carried on the work, there is one deep, sad note in all their pleasure. The voice that cheered them on their way—the hand most resolute, most untiring in the task—the brain that sought out truth and mastered difficulties and comprehended all the vast ramifications of such a work, are now but memories; the eyes that scanned so lovingly and jealously the growing work shall never look on its completion. From the first, Frank Marshall set himself down to the editorship of this edition of Shakespeare, as to the magnum opus of his life. The amount of solid, hard work which he did was almost incredible, and could only have been

accomplished by an unswerving sense of duty, and an iron resolution to keep abreast of his task." Irving, having quoted an eloquent tribute to Mr. Marshall from the pen of Mr. Arthur Symons, wrote: "Every kind thought and just comment thus given on a man of great ability, I endorse most heartily. Frank Marshall was a friend of my life. We were brought together and linked by the golden bond of a common love for the Great Englishman whose work he endeavoured to worthily set forth; and from the hour we first met our friendship ripened, till in all the world I had no warmer friend."

CHAPTER IX.

December, 1888—June, 1889.

"Macbeth" revived—Amusing article in *Truth*—Miss Ellen Terry's Lady Macbeth—A Saga heroine—A brilliant audience—An unfair leading article—Irving's methods explained by a friend—Mr. William Archer's verdict—A vivid description of the Lyceum "Macbeth" by Sir Edward Russell—A long run—Irving plays before Queen Victoria, "by command of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales"—An interesting supper—"Macbeth" draws a large sum to the Lyceum treasury.

THE end of the year 1888 ushered in one of the greatest triumphs in the career of Henry Irving. "This evening," ran the announcement on the first page of the programme, "commences the Thirteenth Season of the present Management." On Saturday, 29th December, "at a quarter to eight o'clock," it continued, "will be presented, for the first time under this management, Shakespeare's tragedy of 'Macbeth'". There had been much excitement in literary and theatrical circles by the preliminary announcement of this revival. When the eventful evening came, curiosity was agog as to the view that would now be taken of the character of Macbeth by the actor whose conception of the part had aroused such controversy in 1875. For it had become known that the "bleeding sergeant," omitted before, was now to be restored with, as one writer put it, the "inconvenient description of 'brave Macbeth's' personal valour". It was therefore inferred that Irving had changed his view of a "craven" Macbeth. Again, Miss Ellen Terry was to play Lady Macbeth for the first time, and there was, if possible, greater eagerness in this respect than in regard to the Macbeth. Mr. Comyns Carr had written a pamphlet in which he had, from inner knowledge, prepared the public for Miss Terry's rendering of

a character inseparably connected with the name of Sarah Siddons, not to mention lesser luminaries of the English stage.

MACBETH.

Revived at the Lyceum, 29th December, 1888.

Duncan	Mr. Haviland.
Malcolm	Mr. Webster.
Donalbain	Mr. Harvey.
Macbeth	Mr. Henry Irving.
Banquo	Mr. Wenman.
Macduff	Mr. Alexander.
Lennox	Mr. Outram.
Ross	Mr. Tyars.
Menteith	Mr. Archer.
Angus	Mr. Lacy.
Caithness	Mr. Leverton.
Fleance	Master Harwood.
Siward	Mr. Howe.
Seyton	Mr. Fenton.
Two other Officers	Mr. Hemstock. / Mr. Cass.
A Doctor	Mr. Stuart.
A Sergeant	Mr. Raynor.
A Porter	Mr. Johnson.
A Messenger	Mr. Coveney.
An Attendant	Mr. Roe.
Murderers	Mr. Black. / Mr. Carter.
Gentlewoman	Miss Coleridge.
A Servant	Miss Foster.
Lady Macbeth	Miss Ellen Terry.
Hecate	Miss Ivor.
1st Witch	Miss Marriott.
2nd Witch	Miss Desborough.
3rd Witch	Miss Seaman.
Apparitions	Mr. Baird. / Miss Harwood. / Miss Holland.

Act I., Scene 1. An Open Place; Scene 2. Near Forres—a Camp; Scene 3. A Heath; Scene 4. Forres—the Palace; Scene 5. Inverness—Macbeth's Castle; Scene 6. Inverness—before the Castle; Scene 7. Inverness—Lobby in the Castle. Act II., Scene. Inverness—Court of Macbeth's Castle. Act III., Scene 1. Forres—Hall in the Palace; Scene 2. Forres—Room in the Palace; Scene 3. Forres—Hall in the Palace. Act IV., Scene 1. A Cavern; Scene 2. "Over woods, high rocks and mountains." Act V., Scene 1. England—a Country Lane; Scene 2. Dunsinane—Ante-room in the Castle. Act VI., Scene 1. Country near Dunsinane; Scene 2. Dunsinane—the Castle. Scene 3. The Wood of Birnam; Scene 4. Dunsinane—the Castle; Scene 5. Dunsinane—Plain before the Castle; Scene 6. Dunsinane—another part of the Plain. Period—11th Century.

A commission had been given to Mr. Charles Cattermole for the designs for the major part of the dresses, Mr. Hawes

Craven had painted the chief scenes, and, last but not least, Locke's music had been dispensed with in favour of new compositions by Arthur Sullivan. In all these elements, there was food enough and to spare for the theatrical gossips and the public, who were profoundly interested in Shakespeare and the Lyceum.

The situation was described in very amusing fashion by a writer in *Truth:* "Shakespeare spell ruin indeed! Why, the Bard is the very safest card a manager can play, if he have as much tact and knowledge of human nature as Henry Irving. For, as it happens, no two people appear to agree as to the meaning of any one character in any given play written by this extraordinary man. What is black to one is white to another. 'Hamlet' has never been acted in the memory of living man without a controversy being started about the Prince of Denmark. He is fat, he is lean; he is dark, he is fair; he is sulky, he is amiable; he is morose, he is sentimental; and the wonderful part of it all is that each new reading is justified by copious quotations from Shakespeare's text, which, to tell the truth, varies as much as the opinions of the critical commentators. Thirteen years ago, Henry Irving started a new Shakespearean hare, and away went the crowd in hot pursuit. He discovered, or pretended to have discovered—it does not matter which—that Macbeth, who has usually been presented on the stage as a big, bluff, burly gentleman in a kilt, a man provided with ample lungs and loins, who knew very little and seemed to care less about the supernatural, was, in reality, not brave at all, but a frightened poltroon who was almost afraid of his own shadow—a warrior who could go into the field and win, and who could hack about with a sword when caught like a rat in a trap, but who at home in the domestic circle was always crooning about ghosts, and witches, and uncanny spirits. The daring innovation succeeded well, for it created controversy. Never before were so many Shakespearean pamphlets issued from the press. The Irvingites waged war fiercely, and the anti-Irvingites followed suit. The new craven Macbeth, in the person of Henry Irving, was caricatured,

lampooned to his heart's content; but, what was far more important, people not only talked about the new Macbeth, but went to see it, whether they liked it or not, in order that they might unite their voices to the fierce discussions at dinner-tables and in clubs. At that time, this clever actor was not wholly converted to the new creed. He improved the old, butcherly Macbeth off the face of the stage; but he still believed in the demoniacal character and devilish nature of the wife of the Thane of Cawdor. He secured for the representative of Lady Macbeth, Miss Bateman, the elder." The article then went on to describe, with good-humoured exaggeration, the acting of Miss Bateman, on the traditional lines. Of course, it was not a case of Irving's "securing" this lady, for her mother was the lessee and manageress of the Lyceum at that time. No greater contrast in appearance and style could be imagined than that between Irving's first Lady Macbeth and his second. "But clever as ever," continued *Truth*, "alert to catch the shifting straws of public opinion, knowing full well that Miss Ellen Terry is, perhaps, the most popular actress on the stage at the present time, he has persuaded himself that the Lady Macbeth who thirteen years ago was a shrew of the most determined type, the kind of woman to be carefully avoided, is in reality the sweetest and most affectionate character who ever drew breath. The astute manager has not found it difficult to persuade 'our dear friend, Ellen Terry,' to fall in with his new views. A Macbeth based on recollections of Eugene Aram is now accompanied by an æsthetic Burne-Jonesy, Grosvenor Gallery version of Lady Macbeth, who roars as gently as any sucking dove! Arrayed in the most beautiful gown that actress ever wore, and certainly looking better than she has ever looked on the stage, the artistic and the cultured are prepared to bow before the divinity, and to believe, or make believe, that Lady Macbeth has been very much maligned, that the very thought of murder would draw tears from her eyes, that she can exhibit in this character playfulness, tenderness, affection, and conjugal rapture, and that she can make of the sleep-walking scene—which in the

hands of Mrs. Siddons made people shudder—a pretty replica of the mad business of the distraught and dreamy-looking Ophelia."

But even *Truth* was compelled to grow serious towards the end of its clever article: "At the same time, it should be stated, in all fairness, that such a magnificent show as the new 'Macbeth' has never been seen before. Mr. Irving has proved that he is the first of living stage managers, a man with a mind to conceive, and a head to direct, for all the boasted Shakespearean revivals of Macready and Phelps and Charles Kean pale before the new Lyceum splendours." But the real attraction of the revival lay in the impersonation of the two chief characters. Irving's first appearance as Macbeth on the sterile and desolate heath, clad in the homespun tunic and shirt of mail, the striped rug, and the wingèd helmet, and armed with the huge sword and richly bossed buckler of a barbaric period, was picturesque, noble, and commanding. Even those who did not agree with his conception, admitted so much. That conception, by the way, was not the least altered from that of the revival of 1875. "The impressions," said one of the most astute of critics, "psychological and picturesque, which it will leave on the minds of the playgoers of this season will correspond with those of the earlier generation of playgoers who saw the former production. They are impressions of a gaunt and haggard, anxious monarch and warrior of semi-barbaric times, saturnine and reserved, even when first seen, under the influence of evil ambition and supernatural solicitings to ill, and afterwards becoming more and more wretched, less and less master of himself, wilder and wilder in quavering desperation, until at last aroused to die a furious death when baited by those he has mercilessly injured, and deprived one by one of the 'charms' on which he has weakly depended. Miss Terry's Lady Macbeth was a Saga-heroine, the antithesis of the character as presented on the stage up to that time. Her very appearance was a revelation. Her own fair hair was covered with a wig of magnificent, deep-red, worn in long, dependent, heavy, snake-like coils, tied spirally round with

ribbons, and giving a strange, pre-Raphaelite, Medea-like sorcery of aspect to her, even in the midst of all her lively and practical domesticity. Her complexion is heightened to correspond with the hair. And she wears a series of most wonderful and admirable dresses, designed for her, with a judgment and invention amounting to genius, by Mrs. Comyns Carr. They are much heavier dresses than we have been used to see Ellen Terry wear. Most of them are rich in colour and pattern. They are not 'draperies' or 'dreams,' merely veiling the figure. They are clothes. They render to the best advantage in every situation—except, of course, the sleep-scene, where the costume is judiciously and delightfully modified—the firm, the noble, the alert, the vigorous physique and carriage of a woman distinctly of the time and society to which the Macbeths belonged—a woman such as you meet in Ford Madox Brown's pictures in the Manchester Town Hall—such as Rossetti might have painted if he could have imbibed the spirit of the Macbeth era—such a red-haired, splendid, fearless, stimulating, unscrupulous woman as must have lived in many a fancy in reading the quasi-histories, quasi-fictions of Norse times." Miss Terry's appearance in the character is familiar to many playgoers of more modern times through Mr. J. S. Sargent's painting and the coloured reproductions of that portrait.

The first night of the revival brought together an exceptional audience, even for the Lyceum, inasmuch as the American press was represented by a strong muster of journalists. The royal box was occupied by Mr. Phelps, the American Minister, and a party, and in the O. P. box were the Earl and Countess of Londesborough. In other boxes were Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lawson (Lord and Lady Burnham), Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lawson, and members of the Terry-Lewis family. In the stalls were many celebrities including Sir Edward Clarke, Lord Fife, Lord Onslow, Lady Dorothy Neville, Sir (then Mr.) F. C. Burnand, Sir (then Mr.) W. S. Gilbert, Sir (then Mr.) Charles Mathews, Mr. Linley Sambourne, Mr. Val Prinsep, Mr. J. C. Parkinson, Mr. Pinero,

Mr. H. W. Lucy, and many others, since dead, including Edmund Yates, Mrs. Keeley, Frank Marshall and his wife, Ada Cavendish, Hamilton Aïdé, Edward Lockwood, Charles Dickens the younger, and, among the critics, Clement Scott and Joseph Knight. At the conclusion of the first performance, there was the usual demand for a speech, in response to which the actor-manager said: "Ladies and gentlemen, you have 'tied me to a stake,' but I shall not attempt to flee from it. I heartily thank you for this spontaneous welcome. I assure you we are delighted to be back among you again, and with regard to the production of this play, it has been a labour of love to us all. We have been glad to have Sir Arthur Sullivan aiding in the task. Our dear friend, Ellen Terry, in appearing as Lady Macbeth, for the first time, before a metropolitan audience, has undertaken, as you may suppose, a desperate task, but I think no true lover of art could have witnessed it without being deeply interested, and without a desire to witness it again. As to the general performance, we are full of shortcomings, which we are ever striving to mend, in order that we may be worthy of your approval. For the kind, generous, I may almost say affectionate manner in which you have welcomed us to-night, I thank you again most heartily."

Apart from the real interest in the controversy which was created by the new Macbeth and the still newer Lady Macbeth, the various newspapers, directly and indirectly, contributed to the commercial success of the venture. For example, the *Standard*, which, my readers may be reminded, had, on the eve of Irving's first appearance in America, exhorted Americans to apply the severe test of "impartial criticism," now devoted another severe leading article to informing the British playgoer that if he wanted to see fine acting he should not heed "Macbeth" at the Lyceum but should betake himself to Paris and see M. Mounet-Sully in the "Œdipe Roi"—the French version of the "Œdipus" of Sophocles—at the Théâtre Français. The article endeavoured to decry the Lyceum performance by blaming the public. "The French people," it

said, "take their stage—their better and higher stage, at least —seriously, and we do not. It would be impossible to imagine a more striking contrast, save in the theme, than between 'Macbeth' at the Lyceum and 'Œdipus' at the Français. Only national prejudice, or national vanity of the most absurd description, would allege that, as far as the dignity, the honour, the glory of the stage is concerned, the superiority of the former is immeasurable." This was hardly patriotic, and it was a manifest injustice to the actor-manager of the Lyceum who had done all that intellect, pains, and money could do, to place Shakespeare's tragedy on the stage in a worthy manner. Irving ran what was a national theatre, with his own money. If he had had a subsidised theatre like the Français, if he had enjoyed, like M. Mounet-Sully, freedom from all managerial anxiety, if he had been called upon like the French actor and all other members of the Comédie Française only to perform two or three nights a week, he would have been alive now. The *Standard* article was unjust, for the comparison was unfair and the inference not in accordance with facts. He was naturally incensed by the "leader," which appeared on the first day of January, 1889. He saw it at once, and wrote without delay to a friend: "There is a most impudent and priggish article in the *Standard* to-day. . . . There is disappointment and spleen in every line."

Mr. Frank Marshall wrote a letter to the *Standard* in reply to its leading article, in which he gave some interesting details of the manner in which Irving approached a Shakespearean revival. "I can assure the writer of the article," he stated, "from personal knowledge, that when Mr. Irving undertakes to realise any character on the stage, whether it be in one of Shakespeare's plays or not, he does not merely think how he can get the best effect for himself, by means of dresses and scenic accessories, effective groupings, etc., but that he really tries to think out what was the author's conception of the character. I may differ with him in many important points as to his view of 'Macbeth,' but I know very well that on all these points he has thought long and seriously, and

therefore I am not at all inclined to treat his view, however different from my own, with contempt. . . . It should be remembered that Mr. Irving is by no means the first actor-manager who has attempted to put 'Macbeth' on the stage in the most elaborate manner. Garrick, Kemble, Macready, in their day, and according to their several lights, did so, and each in his turn was the subject of much denunciation on the part of the critics, for departing from the received ideas of the leading character. As to Lady Macbeth, Lady Martin, I think, could tell us of criticisms almost identical with those which are now being pronounced upon Miss Ellen Terry's Lady Macbeth, having been pronounced upon her representation of the character, when, as Helen Faucit, she first played it. How bitterly Edmund Kean, and, after him, Macready, were denounced for their departure from the grand and statuesque manner of John Kemble, in this and other Shakespearean parts, is a matter of dramatic history."

Mr. William Archer, who had been writing the dramatic criticisms in the *World* since the death of Dutton Cook in 1883, agreed with Irving in his conception of the character of Macbeth, although he could not entirely endorse his acting of it: "For my part, I have no quarrel whatever with Mr. Irving's conception of Macbeth. I do not think he has misunderstood the part in any vital point. During the greater part of the action, Macbeth is in a state of nervous agitation varying from subdued tremor to blue funk. He says so himself, and he should know. He says also that he is naturally a brave man, and Mr. Irving gives us no reason to doubt it. Bravery does not mean insensibility to fear, but the power of conquering it. Macbeth's own account of himself is that he can face the armed rhinoceros or the Hyrcan tiger without flinching, but that the sense of guilt, reinforced by supernatural visitings, unmans him; and with this statement Mr. Irving's rendering is quite consistent. What was wrong thirteen years ago was not his poltroonery, but the grotesqueness of its manifestations—a fault which is now in great measure reformed. The actor has mastered his means more thoroughly than hereto-

fore, and keeps a tight rein on those peculiarities of gesture and expression which used to run away with him". Mr. Archer objected to the interpretation—or, rather, to the limitations of the actor's voice and to his method—but the criticism was dignified and within the province of the critic, in which respect it differed from his youthful diatribe of thirteen years previously.

One of the most lucid articles on this revival appeared in the Liverpool *Daily Post* on the Monday following the production. It was by "An Old Hand," otherwise Sir Edward R. Russell. It is impossible to do more than quote a few of the passages from this remarkable essay, for it is a very long one. The critic had much to say concerning Miss Terry's Lady Macbeth and he proved that Irving's representation of the Thane was identical with his previous impersonation. He thought the dresses "a constant source of pleasure; all the more because they do not seem to be 'worn in the newest gloss'. Thus, by the co-operation of costumiers and scene-painters, each scene is a very noble picture. But of all the scenes," he said, "the most effective is the court of Macbeth's castle, where he sees the air-drawn dagger, and where practically the central tragedy of the play is performed, though with great art kept out of sight of the audience. It is of irregular construction, built in the style wherein Norman architecture began to put on decoration, but fully retained its rounded masses and its rugged strength. The rude entrance-hall in the rear—sombre or bright as the outer portal is open or closed—faces the spectators. Above the passage leading to it are murky arcaded galleries. On the right is a staircase. On the left is a round tower-like structure suggestive of a spiral stairway. Against this Lady Macbeth leans her back restlessly while the murder is in progress. The passage past it is the way Macbeth is marshalled by the dagger which he sees before him. The place is comparatively dark. The revellers have settled to their slumbers. Banquo has gone through on his way to bed, and said 'Good night' to his host, and received with distant though courteous austerity his sinister overture for

future co-operation. The murderous intriguer is alone. The last attendant is dismissed by Macbeth's hasty order. Mr. Irving's dagger soliloquy is most searching in its ghastly truth. His exit to commit the murder is a living embodiment of the wonderful text, which, as it were, reels and yawns and rocks, a very abyss of moral dread and sickened horror. Then enters Lady Macbeth with a firm step, making a frank and meaning confession of one source of her courage. The words 'Had he not resembled my father,' etc., are presently given, not with the old groaning pathos, but with cursory half-sensibility and entire practical freedom. When Macbeth returns, the scene merges so far as she is concerned into a cool though anxious partner's solicitude. She frets, she gesticulates with vexation as she almost despairingly beholds her husband's dazed and demoralised condition. There is a curious commonplace practicality in the tone of her question, 'Who was it that thus cried?' when Macbeth has been maundering on with his spiritual fancy—so fine and fit in the situation—of the 'Sleep no more'. There is no blenching when she snatches the daggers from him. It is with cool and perfect sincerity that this fierce, firm woman declares that the sleeping and the dead are but as pictures. Yet Miss Terry never misses the greatness, the thrill, the suspense, the dread of the action. This is all felt unremittingly, though her keen practical perception keeps hold solely of the one great exigency of concealing the crime and, what is involved in it, the controlling of her husband's quivering self-betrayal. When she returns with bloody hands from depositing the daggers, it is clear enough that she scorns to wear a heart as white as Macbeth's; and note the curious, curdling touch of detail when she lifts by the tips of her fingers only the robe which lies fallen on the ground. The exit during the knocking at the gate is magnificently real, and the audience is left in a tumult of agitation, when the drunken porter enters to open the door tardily to Macduff and Lennox. What follows can be easily imagined. I have only to record the perfect timing and balancing of the incidents so as to consult reality at every point—the not too rapid but at last turbulent

entrance of the guests from the galleries and staircase—the distant alarm-bell—Macbeth's manner before and after the revelation—the stolid plausibility of his defence of the killing of the grooms—and a splendid idea of Ellen Terry as she stands behind Banquo, nervously assenting by unconscious nods and gestures and inarticulate lip-movements to her lord's story, until her woman's strength fails her, and the cry is raised 'Look to the lady,' and she falls and is raised and carried out with her fair head thrown back over a thane's shoulder, and her red hair streaming in the torchlight. The eager exit of the crowd towards the hall where the murder is to be debated brings this wonderful scene to a grand termination.

"Space and time must fail to describe the play in detail. The banquet scene is very fine in the vein of a Cattermole picture, with a Burne Jones background. Light and darkness are admirably managed, the apparition rises gloomily and vaguely, and makes a part, not too strongly but strongly enough, of the picture. I cannot understand the lowering and raising of torches at the appearance and disappearance of Banquo's spirit; but the necessary effect of etherealising the vision is certainly achieved, though too mechanically. At the close, when Lady Macbeth with strong exhortations has made her guests depart, she remains listless or hopeless on the throne while her husband completes the rhapsodies of his horror. Presently she soothes him, but it is with as little hope as she showed when she drooped on the throne. The hand of spiritual Nemesis is on her. At last husband and wife leave the scene together, and the final incident is a striking one. Macbeth takes a torch from behind a pillar, but suddenly, in a paroxysm, hurls it blazing to the ground. He shrouds his face in his robe as he leans rapidly forward and rests against a pillar. The Queen as swiftly kneels behind him, and remains clinging to his skirts, with an upturned face full of tragical solicitude.

"Anon we see the last of Lady Macbeth in the sleep-walking scene. Here she is comparatively fragile, but has not that deathly appearance which has usually been aimed at.

Nor is there any melodrama in her tones. The chief note of the elocution is a sort of dreamy, half-asleep prolongation of the syllables. Miss Terry is here again beautifully dressed, but it is now in drapery, dove-colour across white. If one were seeing the scene for the first time, its touchingness would seem infinite. There is no denying, however, that the solemn splendour of the grander Lady Macbeth lingers too impressively in the mind to give tender realism its fair chance in this scene. All that tender realism can do Miss Terry effects, and her natural way of re-enacting the incidents of the murder ought to seem more real than the older and more melodramatic manner. Old associations are strong, however.

"In one scene—and a scene much applauded too—something more than old associations is adverse to the rendering given. Mr. Alexander does his best; his best is good; and he looks a handsome Scottish Chieftain: but the scene in which he receives the news of the slaughter of his wife and children requires a depth, a storm, a tempest of emotion, a roar of elocution which are quite beyond his powers.

"The cauldron scene is a triumph of bold invention by Mr. Craven, the cauldron being placed in a circular cavity of rock in a mountainous defile, with jagged steps on which Macbeth stands to consult the witches. It is followed by a wonderful prospect, entitled 'Over woods, high rocks and mountains,' an undulating, far-reaching, aëry mountain-top landscape, the scene of the great convocation of the witches. This, by a happy idea, is not insisted upon in the way of length. It is made brief, and Sir Arthur Sullivan's music is all the more a beautiful feature of this revival, because its prominence is so modest and its province so artistically subordinate. It is excellent and full of fancy, not only in the song and chorus, but in the incidental music, some of which is perfectly delightful. I would instance as especially exquisite the bars which are played as King Duncan arrives at the castle. In the 'Mingle' chorus there is a curious eccentricity of time. Hecate, happily, is made little of in the new version of the tragedy. She is a difficulty, and is best 'minimised'.

"The English woodland scene in which Malcolm and Macduff have their interview is a charming Finnie-like contrast and relief to the other scenery, Mr. Craven being again the artist; and from this we advance to the well-managed military scenes which close the tragedy. I felt more than I ever did before the utility and dramatic impressiveness of that little talk in which Macbeth's enemies discuss upon rumour the condition of the tyrant. It leads up effectively to the spectacle of ruin which Macbeth affords as he roams his castle arguing himself into courage, but relaxing all the time into perfectly hopeless feebleness of will and nature, only relieved by fierce gleams of capricious irascibility. The Birnam Wood difficulty is cleverly surmounted. The forces under arms are numerous. Many details are strikingly illustrative—as, for instance, when the three soldiers stare in through the door in a peeping attitude, with fright in their eyes, while their comrade with blanched cheeks tells the King of the moving wood.

"One feature of the battle-scenes had a peculiar effect upon me. The soldiers 'off' sang as they fought. Simulated distance made it a kind of hum, but there was a distinct tune in it. Whether this is a slogan or not I am too Southron to know, but it added greatly to the irresistible reality of what seemed to be going on.

"The last combat is fierce and sanguinary, and its episodes —all historic and familiar, so powerful is the impress of Shakespeare's art in his greatest moments—may be said to be lit up from instant to instant, or from incident to incident, by the wonderful expression of Mr. Irving's gaunt and wearied face as he talks and acts out the great life or death debate with Macduff. He falls face forwards, after dashing his dagger point downwards at his antagonist's feet. The soldiers execrate the prostrate tyrant in shouts, and Malcolm is raised shoulder high as the green curtain descends."

During the run of "Macbeth"—which lasted for exactly six months—several events of note occurred. In the middle of January, Irving was taken ill with a severe cold, and, for the first time in his London career, was compelled to absent

himself from the theatre on 17th January. Fortunately, that excellent actor, Mr. Hermann Vezin, was available, and he played Macbeth until the 26th. A month later, there was a performance of "Julius Caesar" at Oxford which was interesting to Henry Irving inasmuch as it introduced his elder son, Mr. H. B. Irving, of New College, to the amateur stage, in the small part of Decius Brutus, Marcus Brutus being acted by Mr. Arthur Bourchier. The representation took place on 27th February, Mr. Irving being then eighteen and a half years old. In April, came the honour of a "command" performance at Sandringham. Queen Victoria was on a visit to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the entertainment was given so that her Majesty might see Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry for the first time. The company numbered seventy-six people. The visit to Sandringham necessitated the closing of the Lyceum for the evening. An exact copy of the programme is given on the next page.

Irving, as usual, accepted the honour, not as a personal compliment, but as a tribute to his profession. Interviewed on the subject, he said: "The honour conferred upon myself and the Lyceum company is one in which we all share—we, the actors of the time—it reflects all round. It is a tribute to the stage which is not merely individual—it is collective."

Irving gave many suppers during the first half of this year in the Beefsteak rooms, one of the most interesting being that to the American Minister, Mr. Lincoln, the guests also including M. Coquelin and the late Wemyss Reid. On the evening of 2nd June, Irving—having acted Macbeth in the afternoon—played Mathias for the benefit of the Actors' Benevolent Fund. Toole and Sims Reeves also appeared, and M. Coquelin recited "La Mouche". The Fund benefited to the extent of £450. The season closed on Saturday, 29th June, and the manager, in one of his happy little speeches, announced that the autumn season would commence in September with the revival of an old play which had been in his possession for many years—"The Dead Heart". He thought that there could be no better time for its reproduction than the year of

the centenary of the capture of the Bastille, and he said that amongst many old favourites of the public who would appear in it, a prominent one would be his "old friend Bancroft, whose reappearance will, I am sure, be as welcome to you as to me".

V. R.

THEATRE ROYAL, SANDRINGHAM.

Royal Entertainment.—By command of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, before Her Majesty the Queen.

On Friday Evening, 26th April, 1889.

"THE BELLS."

A drama in three acts, from the "Juif Polonais" of MM. Erckmann-Chatrian.

Mathias	Mr. Henry Irving.
Walter	Mr. Howe.
Hans	Mr. Johnson.
Christian	Mr. Alexander.
Dr. Zimmer	Mr. Haviland.
Notary	Mr. Coveney.
President of the Court	Mr. Tyars.
Mesmerist	Mr. Archer.
Catherine	Mrs. Pauncefort.
Sozel	Miss Linden.
Annette	Miss Coleridge.

Alsace, 1833.

After which the Trial Scene from

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

Shylock	Mr. Henry Irving.
Duke of Venice	Mr. Howe.
Antonio	Mr. Wenman.
Bassanio	Mr. Alexander.
Salarino	Mr. Harvey.
Gratiano	Mr. Tyars.
Clerk of the Court	Mr. Coveney.
Nerissa	Miss Linden.
Portia	Miss Ellen Terry.

Director, Mr. Irving; Assistant Director, Mr. Loveday; Musical Director, Mr. Ball. The scenery painted by Mr. Hawes Craven; the act-drop painted by Mr. Hann.

God Save the Queen.

There were one hundred and fifty-one continuous performances of "Macbeth"—the longest run in the history of the tragedy. The receipts were £49,906 15s.—an average of over £330 a performance for six months, a proof that the public interest was strong. Another interesting fact is that

the Lyceum version of the play sold well, the public paying £350 5s. for the book of words, as against £133 for the souvenir, thereby showing that the intellectual portion of the audience was largely represented—the rule, not the exception, at the Lyceum. Another sign of the popularity of "Macbeth" at the Lyceum was the publication of a book of clever caricatures—amusing, and by no means cruel—under the title, "The Real Macbeth, by the Real Macduff".

CHAPTER X.

September, 1889—January, 1893.

"The Dead Heart"—First appearance of Miss Ellen Terry's son—Irving as Robert Landry—161 consecutive performances of the old drama—Minor events—Irving obtains the withdrawal of an objectionable caricature—Recitals of "Macbeth"—"The Bride of Lammermoor" dramatised for the Lyceum—Irving as the Master of Ravenswood—A signal honour—Irving "selected" for the Marlborough Club—Makes a presentation to one of his old managers—The Actors' Benevolent Fund—Unveils the memorial to Marlowe—Ibsen *versus* Shakespeare—"Henry VIII." produced—Its enormous cost—Irving as Wolsey—Irving receives his first university degree—Enthusiasm of the Dublin students and people—An unfortunate incident—A kindly remark—"King Lear" revived—Irving's pathos.

THE two next productions at the Lyceum—"The Dead Heart" and "Ravenswood"—afforded a striking proof of Irving's marvellous capacity, not only for taking pains, but for infusing new life into old plays. In regard to the first-named piece, he transformed an Adelphi melodrama of the usual pathetic-humorous order into a fine drama. And he did it so successfully that he converted the adherents of the former school to his own way of thinking. In place of that "ripe comedian," Paul Bedford, he had a sound and conscientious member of the Lyceum company, Mr. F. Tyars, who could not possibly be accused of being comic, but he made a concession in engaging an acknowledged comedian, Edward Righton, for the amusing part of the perruquier, Toupet, originally acted by Toole. In effect, however, he dispensed with the comic side of the story. With the assistance of Mr. Walter H. Pollock, who wrote some new dialogue, he changed the old play into a high-class drama which would have astonished its gifted author, Watts Phillips. But if that excellent

artist and playwright turned in his grave in Brompton Cemetery on the night of the 28th September, 1889, it must have been with satisfaction. There was no comparison, in the matter of decoration, with the original production at the Adelphi on the 10th of November, 1859. The scenery was a succession of beautiful pictures which added lustre to the record of Mr. Hawes Craven. The storming of the Bastille—the real event had taken place a hundred years before—was one of the most stirring spectacles ever seen on the stage of the Lyceum. M. Georges Jacobi, the gifted director of the Alhambra orchestra, arranged and supervised the music of the period, and a specialist, in regard to the decorations of Paris during the Revolution, guaranteed accuracy in the designs of the dresses.

Apart from Irving himself, the new cast was in accordance with modern ideas and the traditions of the Lyceum. The original Catherine Duval—who, in the play proper, is a grief-stricken, grey-haired lady—was Miss Woolgar, an actress so dissimilar in her style to the author's ideal of the character that Watts Phillips was in despair. "Miss Woolgar is to act Catherine Duval!!!!!" he announced with the prolific use of the mark of exclamation which was so common in the leisurely days of the middle of the last century. "She refused it at first because (very truly) she was not a tragic actress; pressed to do it on pain of dismissal, she consented." Miss Woolgar, however, made a success in the part. Miss Ellen Terry's case was somewhat similar. She was not threatened with banishment from the Lyceum cast, but she did not undertake the task with joyousness. "Here I was in the very noonday of life," she records, "fresh from Lady Macbeth, and still young enough to play Rosalind, suddenly called upon to play a rather uninteresting mother in 'The Dead Heart'. However, my son made his first appearance in it, and had such a big success that I soon forgot that for me the play was rather 'small beer'." Miss Terry, truly, had not much to do, but that little was done charmingly, and the pathos of the final scene—in which Robert Landry, who makes a sacrifice

similar to that of Sydney Carton,[1] is about to be executed—owed much to her impersonation. Miss Terry's son, Mr. Gordon Craig, appeared as the son in the play—the young Arthur de St. Valery. "There is but little tender or womanly interest in this sad and impressive story. Still," wrote a contemporary critic, "it fell happily to Miss Ellen Terry to awaken it in tearful accents and melting moments ere the curtain fell.

THE DEAD HEART.

Revived at the Lyceum, 28th September, 1889.

Robert Landry - - - -	Mr. Henry Irving.
The Abbé Latour - - -	Mr. Bancroft.
The Count de St. Valery -	Mr. Haviland.
Arthur de St. Valery - -	Mr. Gordon Craig.
Legrand - - - - -	Mr. Arthur Stirling.
Toupet - - - - -	Mr. Edward Righton.
Rebout - - - - -	Mr. F. Tyars.
Michel - - - - -	Mr. Clifford.
Jean - - - - - -	Mr. Harvey.
Pierre - - - - -	Mr. Taylor.
Jocrisse - - - - -	Mr. Archer.
Guiscard - - - - -	Mr. Black.
A Smith - - - - -	Mr. Raynor.
A Crier - - - - -	Mr. Davis.
A Woman - - - - -	Mrs. Carter.
Cerisette - - - - -	Miss Kate Phillips.
Rose - - - - - -	Miss Coleridge.
Catherine Duval - - -	Miss Ellen Terry.

Prologue (1771), Scene 1. The Garden of the Café de la Belle Jardiniére; Scene 2. A Street; Scene 3. Bedchamber of Catherine Duval. Act I. (1789), Scene 1. The Bastille. Tableaux Curtain; Scene 2. Apartment in the Hotel St. Valerie. Tableaux Curtain; Scene 3. The Café Jocrisse. Act II. (1794), Scene 1. Entrance to the Prison of the Conciergerie; Scene 2. Corridor in the Prison; Scene 3. Room in the Prison. Act III. (1794), Scene 1. The Guillotine; Scene 2. Room in the Prison.

The scene at the base of the scaffold in the cold morning light was beautifully played alike by Miss Ellen Terry, and moved the audience to genuine emotion. Of action and excitement,

[1] At the time of the original production, there was much discussion as to the resemblance of the sacrifice in "The Dead Heart" and "The Tale of Two Cities". It was, however, conclusively proved that Watts Phillips' drama had been written, accepted by Benjamin Webster, and paid for by him, three years before the appearance of the story by Dickens. Moreover, the same idea—a man who takes the place of another on the scaffold, for the sake of the woman he loves—is not peculiar either to Watts Phillips or Charles Dickens.

there had been plenty, here was the pathos, true, direct, and unaffected." Another feature of the revival was the return to the stage of Mr. Bancroft, whom Irving had prevailed upon to accept the part of the crafty, affected villain, the Abbé Latour, who eventually is killed in a duel which has been forced upon him by Robert Landry. There was considerable curiosity on the part of the public to see this actor, who had not played since his retirement.[1]

Irving's own performance was the most remarkable feature of the revival. For, as Robert Landry, he showed versatility in a notable manner. In the prologue, he had to appear as a gay young sculptor, and wonderfully handsome he looked in his yellow coat, with his dark, wavy hair, as he lead a dance of light-hearted students in the garden of a Parisian café. When he was next seen, eighteen years were supposed to have passed away, during which time Landry had been imprisoned in a dungeon in the Bastille. Memory had become obliterated, and the heart, suffering from the apparent deceit of the beloved Catherine, had become dead to all feeling. "The maddened mob is storming the Bastille. Flags wave, women cheer, men shriek, cannons are brought up, and down come the ponderous gates with a crash. In rush the men-maniacs and she-devils, and out come the tortured and long-forgotten prisoners. Last to be rescued is a doleful creature, with matted hair, unkempt beard, and wandering eye, blinking like an owl in the light, and beating his brain in his frenzy to get back memory as the blacksmith files away the murderous chains." Landry recovers his brain, rises to power, and becomes one of the leading spirits of the Convention. The cause of all his trouble, the Abbé Latour, is in his keeping—with the young Arthur St. Valery, he is condemned to death. This was Irving's great scene, from the point of view of sheer acting—the scene in the prison of the Conciergerie. Landry

[1] "If I remember rightly," Irving wrote to me in September, 1903, in reference to the proofs, which he had been reading, of the forthcoming history of the Lyceum, "there was no mention made of Bancroft as the Abbé Latour in 'The Dead Heart' revival. Something should be said about his admirable performance."

compels Latour to fight a duel to the death. The opponents are alone, without chance of disturbance. "It is a splendid fight," said the *Daily Telegraph*—"craft and recklessness on the one side, determination and vengeance on the other. The pale, calm face of Landry is opposed to the shifty, treacherous countenance of the Abbé. They fight and the Abbé falls. He dies with his secret on his lips, grovelling at the feet of his relentless adversary. 'That man attempted my life, and I killed him. Remove the body of the citizen Latour!' So says the citizen Landry to the attendant soldiers, and the curtain falls. The situation is one of thrilling excitement, and the acting is admirable throughout. Mr. Bancroft is no longer Tartuffe, but Triplet. He is a new man. He jauntily carols Monarchial songs and enters Landry's presence with a pathetic air of defiance. The duel has been well studied. Mr. Irving's pale, determined features were in superb contrast to the weak 'fribble' with its lank, grey hair. So effective indeed was the scene, that the brother actors were called three times." The last scene, in which Landry is seen awaiting his death, was most impressive. In the distance, a tumbrel slowly approached the guillotine, the darkened stage became gradually lightened, figures were, almost imperceptibly, gathered together, a lurid tone came over all, and, as the mother and son, in the darkened room of the prison, watched with bated breath, they, with the audience in the theatre, saw Landry standing before the guillotine as the fatal number is called.

"The Dead Heart" was played continuously for six months, one hundred and sixty-six consecutive performances being given. During April and May, there were thirteen representations of "The Bells," six of "Louis XI.," and five of "Olivia". "The Dead Heart" was included in the repertory for those two months, so that it was acted, in all, one hundred and eighty-three times, from its revival in September, 1889. The season closed on 31st May, 1890, with "Olivia". The reason for this early termination of the regular season at the Lyceum was explained by Irving in his farewell speech on the last night:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is, I believe, quite contrary

to all the principles of dramatic propriety to address an audience in front of the curtain, but I have committed that crime so often that it is almost impossible to reform—in fact, I'm a hardened offender—and I am here on behalf of Miss Ellen Terry to return her grateful thanks for your presence on this occasion. Although our season has been a longer one than usual, it seems a little odd to be addressing you in this fashion so early as the month of May; but long ago I promised my friend, Mr. Augustin Daly, that he should occupy this theatre from the month of June, when he brings with him that famous company of comedians you know so well and to whom you are sure to give a most cordial and delighted welcome. You probably know that Miss Terry and I purpose giving some recitals of 'Macbeth' beginning next Tuesday in Liverpool, and should any of you be in our neighbourhood we should, of course, be much honoured to see you; but should you not be able to follow us upon any of our expeditions—should Liverpool, or Manchester, or Edinburgh, or Glasgow be too far—perhaps you will come and see us upon our return, at the St. James's Hall, or at the Grand Theatre at Islington, where we are looking forward to the pleasure of playing a fortnight's engagement. Our next season will begin in September, when we shall present to you a new play by Herman Merivale (if what was written ten years ago can be called new); and judged from a literary standpoint I think you will find the play to be a genuine addition to the English drama. Its theme is the immortal romance of the 'Bride of Lammermoor,' and the play will be embellished by the music of Dr. Mackenzie, to whom, and to Mr. Seymour Lucas, we are indebted for most valuable aid. As for the actors, their names are familiar to you, and I think you may reckon on their well-tried efforts to win your approval. And now, ladies and gentlemen, I have only to thank you again and again for your constant kindness and good will, to assure you that it is everything to know that your good wishes are with us, and that we shall anticipate with the keenest pleasure our next meeting here (if all be well) in September."

A book of "The Dead Heart" was sold in the theatre, but, reversing the order of things in the previous season, when the Lyceum version of "Macbeth" exceeded the sale of the souvenir of the production, "The Dead Heart" souvenir had a far larger sale than the book of words—some 6,600 souvenirs being sold during the run. The production account for this season contains some curious items, including the payment of fees for plays which never saw the light at the Lyceum, one of which was called "Mahomet".

In February of this year, there were two minor events which must be chronicled. On the 12th, a banquet was given to J. L. Toole—then on the eve of his visit to Australia—in the Whitehall Rooms of the Hôtel Métropole. Sir Edward Clarke, then Solicitor-General, took the chair, and Irving recited a poetical address, written by Clement Scott, entitled "Farewell! But not good-bye". A week later, being Ash Wednesday—when the London theatres were closed—he was the recipient of a supper given by the Wolverhampton Literary and Scientific Society, of which he was the president. It may also be added that on 9th December, 1889, he had given a supper to the celebrated American showman, P. T. Barnum, in the Beefsteak rooms. His other guests on this occasion included Edmund Yates, Clement Scott, Eugene Field, E. A. Oakey Hall, J. L. Toole, Mr. Bancroft, and Mr. Beerbohm Tree. Another notable supper was given, shortly afterwards, in those historic rooms, to Prof. Vambéry.

A week before the production of "The Dead Heart," Irving was subjected to the one caricature which he resented bitterly, and, for the first time in his life, he took steps which ended in the withdrawal of an offensive skit. On 21st September, there was produced, for the first time in London, at the Gaiety Theatre, a burlesque on "Ruy Blas," in which Mr. Fred Leslie, an admirable actor in his line and a thorough artist, gave an imitation of Irving in petticoats. This was not legitimate satire, and Irving wrote to the Gaiety comedian objecting to being "put in women's clothes" and requesting the "immediate withdrawal" of the "exhibition".

Mr. Leslie replied that he had no idea of annoying the Lyceum manager and that he had referred the matter to his own manager. Mr. George Edwardes, interviewed on the subject, professed some indignation at Irving for having ignored him: "He did not think fit to write to me, but he wrote to Mr. Leslie, who is only a paid artist in my company, and has to do what I tell him to do. . . . Had Mr. Irving applied to me, I should have been willing to eliminate the objectionable caricature, but now I shall do nothing of the kind, but shall keep it on until I am forced—if I can be forced—to take it off." It seems a pity that the Gaiety manager was not more gracious in the matter. A clerk from the Lord Chamberlain's office called upon him and reminded him of a certain clause in his lease, with the result that he was "forced" to withdraw the vulgar caricature after a few nights.

The recitals of "Macbeth" to which Irving had alluded in his speech on the last night of the 1889-90 season, were given, during June and July, in Liverpool, Manchester, Hanley, Bradford, Birmingham, Sheffield, Glasgow, Dundee, and Edinburgh. There were two recitals in London, at the old St. James's Hall, on 25th June and 16th July. These recitals, which were accompanied with music, were arduous, for Irving represented all the chief characters save Lady Macbeth. He did more than speak the words, for he threw himself heart and soul into the task of impersonation. The murder and the witches' scenes aroused the greatest enthusiasm, and the closing scene —the fight between Macbeth and Macduff—was represented with extraordinary vigour. Beginning on 30th June, Irving played a fortnight's engagement at the Grand Theatre, Islington. During the first week he acted in "The Bells," and, during the second, in "Louis XI". July of this year was, indeed, well occupied, for Irving was invited to a Garden Party given by Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace, and amid all the crowd of notabilities whose portraits appeared in the illustrations of this event, his portrait was conspicuous. On the 18th, at a meeting in support of a Fine Art Gallery for South London,

he made an eloquent plea for something that should "take people out of the joyless humdrum of their daily existence". He spoke with keen sympathy for those whose "hard lot surrounds with very unlovely things and denies a glimpse of treasures which are enjoyed by their more fortunate fellows". He also made some humorous references to "the human race, which consists entirely of ratepayers," and their opposition to state-aided art. He had worked incessantly for a twelvemonth when August brought him a brief respite before the active preparations for "Ravenswood" began.

RAVENSWOOD.

First acted at the Lyceum, 20th September, 1890.

Edgar	Mr. Henry Irving.
Hayston of Bucklaw	Mr. Terriss.
Caleb Balderstone	Mr. Mackintosh.
Craigengelt	Mr. Wenman.
Sir William Ashton	Mr. Alfred Bishop.
The Marquis of Athole	Mr. Macklin.
Bide-the-Bent	Mr. H. Howe.
Henry Ashton	Mr. Gordon Craig.
Moncrieff	Mr. Tyars.
Thornton	Mr. Haviland.
A Priest	Mr. Lacy.
Lockhard	Mr. Davies.
Lady Ashton	Miss Le Thiere.
Ailsie Gourlay	Miss Marriott.
Annie Winnie	Mrs. Pauncefort.
Lucy Ashton	Miss Ellen Terry.

Act I., Scene. The Chapel Bounds. Act II., Scene 1. Ravenswood—the Library; Scene 2. Tod's Den; Scene 3. The Wolf's Crag. Act III., Scene. The Mermaid's Well. (An interval of one year.) Act IV., Scene 1. Ravenswood—a Room; Scene 2. The Sea-coast; Scene 3. The same; Scene 4. The Kelpie's Flow.

Irving's next production at the Lyceum was an adaptation of "The Bride of Lammermoor" with which, on 20th September, 1890, he began his fifteenth season in London. As in the case of "The Dead Heart," he gave an air of novelty to an old subject. Apart from the opera, so associated in the minds of many people with Scott's story, old playgoers remembered other adaptations made for the theatre, and traditions of the impersonations of Edgar of Ravenswood by such celebrated actors as Fréderic Lemaître and Charles Fechter

had to be taken into account. Fechter, indeed, had appeared in the character on the Lyceum stage just a quarter of a century before, in an adaptation by Palgrave Simpson, a dramatist of distinction. Irving, however, would not trust to an old version. He enlisted the services of Herman C. Merivale, who had written several successful plays, a man, moreover, of poetic feeling and a writer of unusual accomplishment. There was no question of the literary grace of "Ravenswood," but the play was unnecessarily encumbered with gloom. Even in "Hamlet," where the same idea of a fate-haunted hero is carried to its tragic conclusion, there is some relief from the serious note. There was a settled melancholy about "Ravenswood" which was somewhat depressing, and, undoubtedly, militated against the popularity of the play. Only eighty-four consecutive performances were given, the total number during the season being one hundred and two. There were some excellent actors in the cast, although they were not all particularly well-fitted. And Miss Ellen Terry, beyond being winsome and sympathetic, could not do much with such a part as Lucy Ashton. The scenery was alternately impressive in its mystery and beautiful in its colour. One scene in particular, by Mr. Hawes Craven, that of the Mermaiden's Well, was a lovely picture of sunshine and flowers. Special music was written by Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, who caught the spirit and poetry of the sad story to perfection. But the absence of humour was a great detriment. Irving made a personal success in the character of the romantic lover. His picturesque appearance as the unhappy Master of Ravenswood was in itself an asset of great value, and the intensity of his acting made a marked impression. In the last act, there was a duel between Edgar and Hayston of Bucklaw, and here his superb fencing proved that Irving had not lost the art which he had learned in his youth and had practised continually.

Beginning at Christmas with "The Bells," revivals of favourite plays occupied the Lyceum until the end of July. Irving acted Mathias eleven times, and he gave twelve performances of "The Lyons Mail". On 4th March, "Charles

From the picture by J. Bernard Partridge.

RAVENSWOOD.

the First" was reproduced, and, on 22nd April, "Olivia" was revived, the former piece being represented on twenty-eight occasions, the latter on sixteen. The greatest attractions of this season were "The Corsican Brothers" and "Much Ado About Nothing". Shakespeare's comedy was revived early in January, and it was played fifty-three times, the season ending with it, on 25th July. The longest run accorded to these old pieces was that of fifty-seven performances of "The Corsican Brothers". The melodrama had, during the majority of these representations, an attractive addition to the programme in the appearance of Miss Ellen Terry as Nance Oldfield, the old farce, "A Regular Fix" being given on other occasions.

In March of this year, a signal honour came to Henry Irving. On the 2nd of that month he was "selected" as a member of the Marlborough Club, being proposed by His Majesty the King—then Prince of Wales—and seconded by the Duke of Fife. This distinction was conferred upon him by virtue of clause three, rule fifteen, of the club, which is as follows: "Three Candidates, pre-eminently distinguished, may be annually selected as Additional Members from the list by the General Committee, a quorum of seven being present, and they shall be called Selected Members. Selected Members shall have all the rights and privileges of Ordinary Members." Irving's other clubs in London, and the dates of his election thereto, were: The Savage, 1871; the Garrick, 21st March, 1874; the Green Room (of which he was an original member), 1877; the Athenæum, 1882; and the Reform, 1884. He was also a member of the old Arundel Club.

During the next month, the Vaudeville Theatre saw the twenty-first anniversary of the opening of the house wherein Irving has made his mark as Digby Grant. The event was duly celebrated on 21st April, 1891, and Mr. Thomas Thorne, who was then the sole manager of the Vaudeville, was the recipient of a testimonial. "Money" was played in the afternoon. The comedy being ended, the stage was filled with well-known people, and on behalf of the subscribers, the presentation of handsome silver gifts and an illuminated ad-

dress was made by Henry Irving, who also spoke a long address, in verse, written for the occasion by Mr. Thorne's old friend, Clement Scott. During this season also, Irving's portrait, painted by W. H. Bartlett, was exhibited in the New Gallery. Two other pictures of some little note in which he was concerned were also issued at this period. One was a "souvenir" of "Olivia," containing portraits of Miss Terry as the heroine and Irving as the vicar, the other being Mr. Bartlett's "Saturday Evening at the Savage Club," in which the actor is a conspicuous figure.

During this season, he took the chair in aid of an institution in which he was deeply interested and of which he was the president—the Actors' Benevolent Fund. Although the fund had been in existence for eight years, this was the first dinner in connection with it. The banquet took place on Wednesday, 24th June, 1891, in the Whitehall rooms of the Hôtel Métropole. His plea on behalf of the poorer members of his calling was not only eloquent, but practical, and he managed to make a hit at certain "theatrical missions" which had then forced themselves into public notice. "I am afraid," he said, "these are conducted only too often in a spirit of antagonism to the theatre. There is a great desire to lay hold of the humbler members of the profession, and to convince them of the sinfulness of their calling. Brands are to be snatched from the burning, and converted players exhibited in the animated waxworks of the missionary stage. It is quite impossible that actors should regard with sympathy the efforts of those who invite people engaged in the theatrical business to a substantial tea, and then lecture them on the imaginary horrors of their occupation." Ever jealous of his calling, he would not brook any attempt at intolerance or patronage, and he never failed to hold up such attempts to derision. The object of the Actors' Benevolent Fund is to help, by allowances, gifts and loans, old or distressed actors and actresses, managers, stage-managers, and their children, and their wives and orphans.

The last four months of 1891 were occupied with a tour

and preparations for the revival of "Henry VIII." The tour began at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on 7th September, and ended at Manchester on 12th December. Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, were also visited, in the order named. "Nance Oldfield" was played in conjunction with "The Bells" and "The Lyons Mail," the rest of the répertoire including "Olivia," "The Merchant of Venice," "Ravenswood," and "Macbeth".

During the progress of this tour, Irving made two speeches of some importance. On Wednesday, 16th September—during the second week of his Islington engagement—he unveiled a memorial to Christopher Marlowe, in his birthplace, Canterbury. The memorial, the work of the late Onslow Ford, A.R.A., is situated at the lower end of Mercery Lane, near Christchurch Gate. In addressing the crowd assembled around the memorial, he said: "Until to-day we have presented to the world no conspicuous symbol of our enormous debt to a man who was contemporary with Shakespeare, and in one sense his tutor, and who was the first to employ with a master hand the greatest instrument of our language. It was natural enough that the fame of Christopher Marlowe should be over-shadowed by that of William Shakespeare, but it is surely some discredit to Englishmen that the fine sense of Marlowe's gifts and services to letters, which scholars have always had, have hitherto found no substantial shape in some trophy for the acclamation of the world. To-day this long oversight has been repaired. Here, in the birthplace of Marlowe, rich as it is in the commanding associations of our history, you have erected a monument which to future generations will speak with a voice no less potent than the historic echoes of this city. What manner of man Marlowe was in outward seeming I suppose nobody knows, but even if it were familiar to us the counterfeit presentment could not have the force and significance of the beautiful figure which we owe to the art of the sculptor. But it is not with Marlowe the man that we need busy ourselves, even if there were more material

than there is for a judgment of his brief and sad career, but it is the ideal of the poet whose 'raptures were all air and fire' that must constantly be present to our minds as we gaze on this image of his worship. It recalls some of his own lines which are eloquent of this devotion :—

> Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
> The wondrous architecture of the world,
> And measure every wandering planet's course,
> Still climbing after knowledge infinite
> And always moving as the restless spheres
> Will us to wear ourselves, and never rest
> Until we reach the ripest fruit of all.

The man who struck such chords as these is not unworthy of a monument in his native place. It was Marlowe who first wedded the harmonies of the great organ of blank verse which peals through the centuries in the music of Shakespeare. It was Marlowe who first captured the majestic rhythms of our tongue, and whose 'mighty line' is the most resounding note in England's literature. Whatever may be thought of his qualities as a dramatist, and whatever place he may hold amongst the great writers who framed the models of English tragedy, he stands foremost and apart as the poet who gave us, with rare measure of richness, the literary form which is the highest achievement of poetic expression. I do not pretend to do justice to Marlowe in this very imperfect utterance of some thoughts which are in your minds. It has been a great privilege to me to come here to-day to perform an office which might have been placed in far worthier hands. But I am glad to have an opportunity of speaking as an Englishman of the claims of Marlowe's fame to be prized and cherished by his countrymen. His reputation should be an abiding element of our national pride. And, finally, as an actor, I am proud to remember that Marlowe's work, like Shakespeare's, was written primarily for the stage; that, if not an actor himself, Marlowe was intimately associated with the actor's calling, and that the Elizabethan dramatists, with Shakespeare the actor at their head, employing the stage as the first medium of their appeal to posterity, linked it for ever with an imperishable glory."

On 14th October, a banquet was given to him by the Liverpool Philomathic Society. In responding to the toast of his health, he took occasion to defend the stage from a charge that its experienced members could not interpret Ibsen. "I have lately read," he remarked, "in the polite language of the writer of a book about what is called 'Ibsenism' that our finished actors and actresses cannot play Ibsen because they are ignoramuses. I thought that some of our younger actresses had played Ibsen rather well, though this, it seems, is because they are novices in art, but experienced in what is called the political and social movement. Outside this mysterious movement you find 'inevitably sentimental actresses,' we are told, who are quite good enough for Shakespeare, but not educated enough for Ibsen. I understand from this authority that one of the qualifications for playing Ibsen is to have no fear of making yourself 'acutely ridiculous,' and I can easily believe that this exponent of Ibsen is not troubled by that kind of trepidation; but if the 'inevitably sentimental actress' in Shakespeare should be a Helen Faucit or an Ellen Terry, I think that most of you will be satisfied with her capacity for the finest achievements of her art. It is certainly a ludicrous pretension that the fitness to play Shakespeare disqualifies an artist for embodying the creations of some dramatist who is supposed to represent a political anti-social movement. I do not know whether the Ibsen drama will obtain any permanent standing on our stage, but it is a comfort to find that, in the opinion of the author I have quoted, Shakespeare will not be entirely extinguished."

During his engagement in Edinburgh in this year, Irving, in his capacity of honorary president of the Students' Union, visited, on 20th November, the Union buildings, in Park Place, and received the warmest of welcomes from a large gathering of the students. His reference, on that occasion, to his early days in Edinburgh, has already been alluded to in the second chapter of Volume I. In concluding his brief address, he spoke of "my dear friend who is gone, whose memory you revere, Archbishop Tait. I have very sweet

recollections of that great, noble, and eminent divine, and it is very delightful to me to find myself in a spot so nearly associated with his early days. I thank you with all my heart. God bless you all. God bless you for yourselves and for the friends I have in this land, this lovely land of yours, this beloved Scotland."

The curious in such matters will like to know that the tour of fourteen weeks resulted in a very handsome profit, despite the enormous expenses—£18,478 14s. 3d., an average of £219 19s. 8d. a night. This, of course, was for the actual expenses of the tour and had nothing to do with the expenditure for the impending revival of "Henry VIII." The production account for the latter representation was exceedingly heavy. In recalling the circumstances, in 1896, Irving admitted, with all candour, that "Henry VIII." was an expensive undertaking: "'Othello,' 'Macbeth,' 'Romeo and Juliet'—these were not plays on which I laid out vast sums. A piece like 'Macbeth,' with eighteen scenes and three hundred people, cannot be suitably mounted for a trifle, but everything was done in due order and measure. One of our most successful productions of late years was 'Becket,' but who will say this was overlaid with ornament? In brief, my principle is to give every play its appropriate setting, and no more. There are extremes, no doubt; one is the luxury of 'King Henry VIII.,' the other is the village simplicity of 'Olivia' or the parsimonious interior of 'Louis XI.' In my judgment, 'Henry VIII.' is a pageant or nothing. Shakespeare, I am sure, had the same idea, and it was in trying to carry it out that he burned down the Globe Theatre by letting off a cannon." He had been taken to task, by a writer of no importance, in regard to the robe which he wore as Cardinal Wolsey. In reference to that reproach, he said: "I had a respectful desire to represent the Cardinal in his habit as he lived, and his habits were most expensive. If you look into the Italian archives of the period you will find that the ambassadors were astonished at his magnificence. Richelieu was a penurious monk by comparison. Now, a friend of mine possessed an old cardinal robe of just

the colour that Wolsey wore, and I sent my robe to Rome to be dyed like that; but the old tint was no longer used there, and I had it reproduced in London. If I am told this was a prodigal caprice, I reply that it was quite in keeping with

KING HENRY VIII.

Revived at the Lyceum, 5th January, 1892.

King Henry VIII.	Mr. William Terriss.
Cardinal Wolsey	Mr. Henry Irving.
Cardinal Campeius	Mr. Beaumont.
Capucius	Mr. Tabb.
Cranmer	Mr. Arthur Stirling.
Duke of Norfolk	Mr. Newman.
Duke of Buckingham	Mr. Forbes Robertson.
Duke of Suffolk	Mr. Tyars.
Earl of Surrey	Mr. Clarance Hague.
Lord Chamberlain	Mr. Alfred Bishop.
Gardiner	Mr. Lacy.
Lord Sands	Mr. Gilbert Farquhar.
Sir Henry Guildford	Mr. Harvey.
Sir Thomas Lovell	Mr. Stewart.
Sir Anthony Denny	Mr. Davis.
Sir Nicholas Vaux	Mr. Seymour.
Cromwell	Mr. Gordon Craig.
Griffith	Mr. Howe.
Gentlemen	Mr. Johnson. / Mr. Archer.
Garter King-at-Arms	Mr. Belmore.
Surveyor to Duke of Buckingham	Mr. Acton Bond.
Brandon	Mr. Seldon.
Sergeant-at-Arms	Mr. Powell.
A Messenger	Mr. Lorriss.
A Scribe	Mr. Reynolds.
A Secretary	Mr. Cushing.
Queen Katherine	Miss Ellen Terry.
Anne Bullen	Miss Violet Vanbrugh.
An Old Lady	Miss Le Thiere.
Patience	Mrs. Pauncefort.

Act I., Scene 1. London—the Palace at Bridewell; Scene 2. Outside the Palace; Scene 3. The Council Chamber in the Palace; Scene 4. A Courtyard; Scene 5. A Hall in York Place. Act II., Scene 1. The King's Stairs, Westminster; Scene 2. An Antechamber in the Palace; Scene 3. A Garden in the Palace; Scene 4. A Hall in Blackfriars. Act III., Scene 1. The Queen's Apartment; Scene 2. The Palace at Bridewell. Act IV., Scene 1. A Street in Westminster; Scene 2. Kimberton. Act V., Scene. Greenwich—Church of the Grey Friars.

Wolsey's taste. When you are getting into the skin of a character, you need not neglect his wardrobe."

The production was, indeed, lavish. Independent of the ordinary working expenses of the theatre, it cost £11,879 1s. 10d. The revival took place on 5th January, 1892, and it

lasted until 30th July, when the one hundred and seventy-second performance was given. Irving also appeared, on six occasions, as Cardinal Richelieu, Lytton's drama being the only other piece represented during this season. The actors' salaries for this seven months' season amounted to £18,356 8s. 10d., and the wages of the supernumeraries to £2221 4s. 10d, a total of over £20,000 on this head alone. The end hardly justified the means, for although the house was crowded at each performance and the receipts amounted to the enormous sum of £58,639 10s., the running expenses were several thousand pounds beyond that enormous sum. This was the first, and last, occasion upon which Irving ever went in for mere pageantry—and he found that it did not pay. Of course, he was adding to his extensive repertory and to his great stock of scenery and costumes. But in only one sense was "Henry VIII." a profitable production, and that was in the one thing for which Irving cared more than anything else—the artistic. The employment of Mr. Seymour Lucas was a guarantee of the correctness of the costumes, and special music was composed by Mr. Edward German. Irving's impersonation of Wolsey —in which character he followed Macready and Phelps—was a magnificent personal triumph. "Mr. Irving follows in the footsteps of no other actor in his portraiture of the last great Roman Catholic prelate who ventured to rule these realms. His is a distinctly original conception, and the evident result of a profound study, not only of the Wolsey of theatrical tradition, but of the Wolsey of history. He is therefore probably more near to historic truth than any of his predecessors in the same difficult part. From the moment when in the plenitude of his intellectual pride and worldly pomp Wolsey sweeps in his splendid robes across the stage, until his affecting humiliation in his last scene, Mr. Irving was, so to speak, a reincarnation of the singular man of fortune who once swayed with a will of iron and a feline sagacity the destinies of England at one of the most momentous epochs of our history. No other actor now before the public possesses, in so pre-eminent a degree, the rare gift of impressing the spectator with the idea

that he is thinking less of himself than of what he is acting. It is fascinating to watch the ever-changing play of his expression, as he listens to those who address him or whose words he desires to overhear, and to follow the movements of his eyes, into which in this particular part, he manages to infuse a sort of ophidian restlessness which at times is quite appalling in its deadly purpose. But there are two distinct sides to Mr. Irving's Wolsey—a good and a bad one. In the earlier scenes, the bad predominates; but in the last two, whatever goodness there is in the man, rises to the surface. In order, therefore, to better illustrate his intention, occasionally his voice and his smile are replete with a certain sad sweetness, difficult to convey to those who have not witnessed the performance. The heart, we can see, is often touched, but the steely Machiavellian intellect cannot, or will not, listen to its more merciful dictates. This dual state of mind accounts for one or two of Mr. Irving's subtlest and most finished touches. The first scene of the third act, for instance—the one in which Wolsey has his momentous interview with the discarded Queen—after listening to her pathetic outbursts of alternated anger and pleading, he says to her in a gentle tone, at variance with his previous apathy :—

> Madam, if your Grace
> Could but be brought to know our ends are honest,
> You'd feel more comfort.

The stony look disappears, and so kindly is the voice that one might almost imagine that in another moment he would extend to the forlorn lady in all sincerity the offer of his powerful influence. Katherine, however, is not to be deceived. She 'knows him full well,' and significantly prefers the escort of Campeius to lead her to her chamber to that of the man she believes to be her greatest foe. Wolsey watches her slowly retreating and sorrowful figure at first pitifully, and then the inscrutable expression steals over the mobile features once more, and with a shrug of the shoulders, he haughtily follows her. All this is in perfect accordance with Mr. Irving's human and unconventional reading of the part, and leads up in ad-

mirable fashion to the great and pathetic soliloquy, the closing lines of which—

> O Cromwell! Cromwell!
> Had I but served my God with half the zeal
> I serv'd my King, He would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies—

Mr. Irving delivers in a voice broken with emotion and even interrupted with sobs. In the exquisite scene which follows, in which the fallen Cardinal admonishes his young Secretary to beware of his example, Mr. Irving rises to the highest expression of histrionic art. With his hands affectionately resting on the head of the only human being who still loves him and feels for him in his misery, he utters his words of wisdom and regret with a depth of feeling and a conviction which never admits of a doubt as to the sincerity of his rather sudden conversion. The blow which has prostrated him he knows is a mortal one, but he bears it with Royal dignity, and his intellectual superiority actually dwarfs the mighty monarch who has crushed him. With an intensity rarely exhibited on our stage, as he sits in lonely grandeur in his chair, Mr. Irving depicts with surpassing effectiveness the soul struggle which rends the heart and intellect of the great statesman who now, in his disgrace, remembers perhaps for the first time that he is a Christian priest. He has greatly offended God, but His mercy is boundless, and the sinful Cardinal realises at last that the vain pomp and glory of this world make indeed 'a burden too heavy for a man who hopes for Heaven'. No wonder

"THE GRAND OLD MAN," GLADSTONE, SEES "HENRY VIII." FROM THE WINGS.

if after an exhibition of such art as that displayed throughout the whole of this trying scene, when the curtain at last slowly descended on the retreating form of the humbled and sorrowing man, the deeply-moved audience insisted on its being lifted again and again." So said the *Saturday Review*.

A noteworthy feature of the revival was the sale of the Lyceum version of the play and of the souvenir. The receipts from this source, during the first run alone, were £566 19s. 9d., the cost of printing being £127 14s., a fair margin of profit, not to mention the advertisement. The theatre was re-opened on 24th September, with "The Bells". On 1st October, "Henry VIII." was reproduced, and it was played until 5th November, the run terminating with the two hundred and third representation.

During the summer of this year, Irving received the first of the three university degrees which were conferred upon him. On Wednesday, 6th July, 1892, the degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon him in the Examination Hall of Trinity College, Dublin, the occasion being the tercentenary celebration of the University. Many degrees were conferred in honour of the event, and, according to a contemporary account in a Dublin paper, "Mr. Alma Tadema, Mr. Henry Irving, and Sir Frederick Leighton certainly formed the most striking group of the honorary graduates as they faced the Provost, while the Public Orator, in well chosen words, described their high claims to distinction and honour". The greatest enthusiasm of the students was bestowed upon Henry Irving. He "had hardly passed"—after receiving the degree—"from the rear entrance into the Fellows' Garden when he was recognised, and, as soon as he emerged from the gateway into the quadrangle, he was cheered tremendously by a large crowd of students and of the public, who uncovered as he passed. Mr. Irving doffed his mortar board in return, and bowed. In a moment, he had been bodily seized from all sides and was thrown on the shoulders of the students, who ran with him across the quadrangle, cheering loudly all the while. At length they deposited him on

the top of the steps of the Dining Hall, and called for an address."

When the cheers had subsided, and the astonished actor had recovered his breath, he said: "My friends, It is an unspeakable delight to me to be here amongst you once again (cheers). It was you first, you know, who gave me my informal degree sixteen years ago (cheers), which you have made a formal degree to-day (prolonged cheers) by electing me as a member of your great university. I speak on behalf of all my brethren, of all my fellow workers, the actors, and they feel very deeply the great, the distinguished honour you have conferred to-day upon their calling (cheers). I shall remember this day, and I shall remember you, and I hope to see you all again very soon (cheers). My regret is that I will not be able to be with you to-morrow night; it would be the greatest delight to me to attend, but my duty calls me back, and I shall have to return. I know that you are all first-rate actors (laughter and cheering), for you have the study and work with which you can do anything in the world, and that knowledge which would lead you to interpret, in a natural and effective manner, the character creations of literature. You are all acorns in the forest of learning and you will grow into intellectual oaks, and show, like your predecessors, what Irishmen can do (loud cheers). I thank you with all my heart and soul. I shall remember this day, and remember you, with gratitude and affection (loud and prolonged cheers)."

The crowd then sang, with heart and voice, "For he's a jolly good fellow," and cheered themselves hoarse. The goodwill shown so generously in the morning was some compensation for the disappointment of the evening, when the Tercentenary Banquet took place in the Leicester Hall. "The well-known features of Mr. Henry Irving could not be discerned at the principal tables at which the most notable of the guests were seated; he occupied a position at a table midway in the body of the hall, a fact which, in connection with another incident during the evening, was a subject of

much comment amongst those present." The incident thus alluded to by the Dublin press was the omission of any allusion to Irving in Sir Frederick Leighton's speech in reply to the toast of "Science, Art, and Literature". The omission, in the words of the *Irish Daily Independent*, "was the cause of pained surprise and the subject of general comment. Whatever differences of opinion there may be as to many of Mr. Irving's characteristics as an actor, there can be only one judgment as to his influence in elevating the tone of the stage, in shedding new light upon the works of the greatest dramatist of the English tongue, and in general services to the cause of the Arts and Literature. The young gentlemen of a university, for instance, are never very much wrong in their estimate of a man, and the reception accorded to Mr. Irving yesterday by Trinity College was the most remarkable, by reason of its warmth and enthusiasm, amongst the many manifestations made in favour of the gentlemen honoured by the University of Dublin." The article deplored the unfortunate incident which was ultimately explained on the ground that Sir Frederick Leighton understood that there was to be a separate reply on behalf of the Drama—and concluded: "It is deeply to be regretted that, either by accident or design, such an occurrence as this should mar the general success of the celebration. The public would feel it their duty to make an *amende* to Mr. Irving if those responsible for what looks so like a slight do not remove an impression which has occasioned considerable annoyance."

During his brief stay in Dublin, Irving visited St. Patrick's (Swift's) Hospital. He conversed freely with many of the patients, "and it was most interesting to watch how readily he appeared to gain the confidence of the poor invalids. The kindly words he spoke to a poor melancholiac who could only again and again say, 'Let me go to my doom,' are not likely to be forgotten by those who listened to the softened voice and manner as he said, 'Heaven will be your doom, poor thing, and there will be peace'."

Irving's knowledge of his limitations as an actor was never

used more to his advantage than in the revival of "King Lear," the tenth of Shakespeare's plays produced by him at the Lyceum. He knew, none so well, that he could not realise, as other actors had endeavoured to do, the colossal terror of the tragedy. He had not the physical means to make his voice sound like thunder in the very rafters of the theatre. He could not shout, and storm, and stamp as Ernesto Rossi had done a few years before at the old theatre, called Her Majesty's, in the Haymarket. Nor could he approach the fine, but physical, delineation of Tommaso Salvini—the greater of the two Italian actors—who laid stress upon the robust side of the character and made the King Lear of the earlier part of the play a typical sportsman, hunter, and rider, of sound constitution and without any suggestion, in the first act, of approaching insanity. Again, Edwin Booth had played the part with marked success, at the Princess's Theatre, only eleven years before. The memory of Salvini's impersonation was still more recent, for that had taken place, at Covent Garden, in 1884. Again, there were the actors and traditions of bygone years to be considered. Garrick was a great King Lear; but it was left for Edmund Kean to restore the Shakespearean play to the stage, and Macready reinstated the Fool in the tragedy. So that Irving could not, as he had done in "Richard III." and "Romeo and Juliet," claim special attention in respect to the text. There were memories of lesser actors to be encountered, for Samuel Phelps had revived the play at Sadler's Wells and Charles Kean had given it a sumptuous clothing at the Princess's. Irving took his own view of what Swinbourne calls "the most terrible work of human genius," and, although it was impossible for him to realise completely the terrific nature of the character, no one who witnessed this performance could forget the infinite pathos of the later scenes between King Lear and Cordelia. In Miss Ellen Terry, he had a Cordelia of matchless sympathy, but he so filled the old King and father with a wealth of tenderness that the conciliation scene between "the very foolish fond old man" and his daughter was one of the most pro-

From the picture by J. Bernard Partridge.

KING LEAR.

foundly beautiful passages ever seen, even on the stage of the Lyceum. As he himself said, in after years, of a welcome given to him, "it is a fragrant memory". It was one of the finest moments in the acting of Miss Terry, for she was doubly inspired by her own view of the character and by the sublimity of Irving. She shed real tears, and when Lear asked, "Be your tears wet?" and touched them with his long, worn

KING LEAR.

Revived at the Lyceum, 10th November, 1892.

Lear	Mr. Irving.
Edgar	Mr. William Terriss.
Edmund	Mr. Frank Cooper.
Earl of Gloster	Mr. Alfred Bishop.
Earl of Kent	Mr. W. J. Holloway.
Duke of Cornwall	Mr. Hague.
Duke of Albany	Mr. Tyars.
King of France	Mr. Percival.
Duke of Burgundy	Mr. Bond.
Curan	Mr. Harvey.
Old Man	Mr. Howe.
Fool	Mr. Haviland.
Oswald	Mr. Gordon Craig.
Physician	Mr. Lacy.
A Knight	Mr. Tabb.
A Gentleman	Mr. Ian Robertson.
An Officer	Mr. Lorriss.
A Herald	Mr. Belmore.
A Messenger	Mr. Powell.
Goneril	Miss Ada Dyas.
Regan	Miss Maud Milton.
Cordelia	Miss Ellen Terry.

Act I., Scene 1. King Lear's Palace; Scene 2. Earl of Gloster's Castle; Scene 3. Duke of Albany's Castle. Act II., Scene 1. Court within Gloster Castle; Scene 2. Open Country; Scene 3. Court within Castle. Act III., Scene 1. A Heath; Scene 2. Another part of the Heath; Scene 3. A Farm House. Act IV., Scene 1. Albany Castle; Scene 2. Open Country; Scene 3. Country near Dover; Scene 4. French Camp; Scene 5. Tent in the French Camp; Act V., Scene 1. British Camp near Dover; Scene 2. The same. Scene. Britain.

fingers, and put the salt drops to his lips before he made reply, "Yes, faith," the spectators, also, were moved to tears. It was a scene which can only be described by the one word—exquisite. When the mind turns to moments like these in the acting of Henry Irving, when we contrast their marvellous beauty with the devilish malignity of his Iago—there was one bit where Irving, as Iago, covered his face with his hands,

and, when it was again revealed, the smiling expression had changed into one of awful potency—it seems idle to discuss the question as to Irving's greatness or otherwise as an actor. Men far less in intellect, though robust in stature and with voices like the peal of an organ, have given the commanding and terrific side of Lear. But no other Lear has so touched the heart.

"If," he said on the 10th of November, 1892, when the first performance of the revival had finished, "our humble efforts have been able to suggest to any one here assembled one of the countless beauties of this Titanic work, we have indeed been amply repaid." The "humble efforts" of the actor-manager had given to "King Lear" one memory of such pathos that recollection of it can never fade, even if nothing more had been accomplished. "King Lear," from its very motive and ground-work, never could be "popular," in the accepted meaning of the word. Yet it ran at the Lyceum for three months, seventy-two consecutive performances being given. It was succeeded by one of Irving's greatest triumphs —one which will redound to his credit and re-echo his fame for many years to come. He played nine other characters which were new to him before his death, but many thousands of playgoers who witnessed his Becket will recount to generations yet unborn the remembrance of that impressive, noble, and eminently spiritual personation.

CHAPTER XI.

February, 1893—March, 1894.

A memorable birthday—The production of "Becket"—Praise from Mr. Archer—Irving's diction "a joy to the ear—His individuality and consummate art"—Irving's long friendship with Tennyson—His reminiscences of the poet—"A noble play"—How Tennyson was induced to condense it for the stage—An inexpensive production—112 representations—Receipts for the season—Irving's fourth American tour—Opens at San Francisco—The amazing financial result—"The Merchant of Venice" still popular—Irving lectures at Harvard—Farewell dinner at Delmonico's.

THE first performance of "Becket" took place on Monday, 6th February, 1893, Irving's fifty-fifth birthday. This felicitous circumstance, combined with the knowledge that the actor had recently been suffering from a slight illness, predisposed the audience to kindness. Other first night audiences at the Lyceum had given the actor the most cordial of receptions and the heartiest of encouragement. But with "Becket" real affection manifested itself early in the evening, and, as the play progressed, Irving won all hearts by an impersonation which seemed as though it were inspired. The play was witnessed with intense interest, and the calls, at the end of each act, were marked by a sincerity of feeling which is seldom seen in the theatre. After the final act, there was an atmosphere of gladness in the house. If there were any unfriendly spirits among the spectators on that occasion, they must have been converted. The note of personal feeling was so strong that it carried everything before it. There was much more than mere acting in Irving's Becket. He had known so much triumph and so much sorrow in his own life that he was able to instil the character of the soldier-priest with a depth which is not touched by Tennyson. His own personality was never so efficacious. His noble dignity, his strange self-absorption,

which removed him from ordinary ken, his power of looking beyond the surface of things, his penetrating eye, his fine hands, his firmness of character, which never let him fall into the lachrymose—all his own attributes—united in enabling

BECKET.

First acted at the Lyceum, 6th February, 1893.

THOMAS BECKET	Mr. IRVING.
HENRY II.	Mr. WILLIAM TERRISS.
KING LOUIS OF FRANCE	Mr. BOND.
GILBERT FOLIOT	Mr. LACY.
ROGER	Mr. BEAUMONT.
BISHOP OF HEREFORD	Mr. CUSHING.
HILARY	Mr. ARCHER.
JOHN OF SALISBURY	Mr. BISHOP.
HERBERT OF BOSHAM	Mr. HAVILAND.
EDWARD GRIM	Mr. W. J. HOLLOWAY.
SIR REGINALD FITZURSE	Mr. FRANK COOPER.
SIR RICHARD DE BRITO	Mr. TYARS.
SIR WILLIAM DE TRACY	Mr. HAGUE.
SIR HUGH DE MORVILLE	Mr. PERCIVAL.
DE BROC	Mr. TABB.
RICHARD DE HASTINGS	Mr. SELDON.
THE YOUNGEST KNIGHT TEMPLAR	Mr. GORDON CRAIG.
LORD LEICESTER	Mr. HARVEY.
PHILIP DE ELEEMOSYNA	Mr. HOWE.
HERALD	Mr. L. BELMORE.
GEOFFREY	Master LEO BYRNE.
RETAINERS	Mr. YELDHAM. / Mr. LORRISS.
COUNTRYMEN	Mr. JOHNSON. / Mr. REYNOLDS.
JOHN OF OXFORD	Mr. IAN ROBERTSON.
SERVANT	Mr. DAVIS.
ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE	Miss GENEVIÈVE WARD.
MARGERY	Miss KATE PHILLIPS.
ROSAMUND DE CLIFFORD	Miss ELLEN TERRY.

PROLOGUE, SCENE 1. A Castle in Normandy; SCENE 2. The same. ACT I., SCENE 1. Becket's House in London; SCENE 2. Street in Northampton leading to the Castle; SCENE 3. The same; SCENE 4. The Hall in Northampton Castle. ACT II., SCENE. Rosamund's Bower. ACT III., SCENE 1. Montmirail—"The Meeting of the Kings"; SCENE 2. Outside the Wood near Rosamund's Bower; SCENE 3. Rosamund's Bower. ACT IV., SCENE 1. Castle in Normandy—King's Chamber; SCENE 2. A Room in Canterbury Monastery; SCENE 3. North Transept of Canterbury Cathedral.

him to give a personation which transcended the art of the actor and raised his rendering of Becket into the realm of genius. Before he was allowed to make his customary speech of thanks—in which he described his work as "a labour of

very great love"—a hearty voice from the pit brought to his ears the wish of all—"Many happy returns of the day". It was so ordained that he was not to have many more returns of the 6th of February, and those few which remained to him were not by any means happy, in the conventional sense. But Becket brought him, more than any other impersonation brought to him, and more than any other performance brought to any actor, the love of the multitude. It is inseparably connected with him, and not only in the history of the stage. For the impersonation is so fresh in the minds of many thousands of people, and the impression of that impersonation is so lovable and so reverential that his fame in this character will increase as time goes on, and the name of Henry Irving will become linked with that of Thomas Becket and Alfred Tennyson.

Apart from the popular effect which he made on the night of his first appearance in the character, he won the unstinted praise of all the critics. A volume could be filled with the eulogy which was bestowed upon him in the newspaper press during the early part of 1893, but there is no occasion to prove the case of Irving as Becket. For the purposes of biography, however, it may be as well to place on record two criticisms which were well considered. The first is by Mr. Archer, who certainly was not biassed in favour of Irving either as manager or actor. Nevertheless, he was constrained to admit that "in point of artistic delicacy and strength his Becket deserves to rank with his Charles I. So long as he is on the stage, we are interested, fascinated, moved; and if there are one or two bad quarters of an hour when he is *not* on the stage, that is Tennyson's fault, not his". This was high praise indeed. But the admissions which follow, coming from such a quarter, are even more gratifying:—

"It is difficult to analyse the impression produced by Mr. Irving's Becket, and decide how much of it is due to artistic intention and effort, how much to mere physical aptitude. The latter element is undoubtedly of great importance. It would be difficult for Mr. Irving to fail in an ascetic, a sacerdotal character. His cast of countenance, his expression, his manner, are all prelatical in the highest degree. Nature designed him for a Prince

of the Church; he would have played the spectacular side of the character to perfection, and I do not think that the diplomatic function would have suffered at his hands. Thus a part of his success of Becket lay in his mere personality, and is to be accounted to him for (artistic) righteousness only in so far as that very personality is a work of deliberate art. Every self-conscious human being is his or her own creator to a certain extent; and this is specially true of actors in general, and of Mr. Irving in particular. But there is much more than his mere personality in Mr. Irving's Becket; there is imagination, there is composition, there is—pray, Mr. Printer, indulge me with characters adequate to so startling an averment—there is DICTION! If the actor had relied on his personality alone, and played the part simply, as he could not help playing it, there would have been nothing, except details of costume, to distinguish it from his Wolsey. As it is, the two men are clearly individualised—one may almost say sharply contrasted. Wolsey was above all the statesman-priest; Becket is the hero-priest. Craft, policy, personal ambition, love of power, were the ruling forces in the Cardinal; the Archbishop is animated by an intense, simple-minded, almost fanatical devotion to the Church, untainted by either subtlety or self-seeking. This may or may not be the Becket of history; it is certainly the Becket of Tennyson, whom Mr. Irving embodies with infinite sympathy, fidelity, and charm. Truth to tell, he is no great genius, this Thomas of Canterbury. He impresses us by force of character—by courage and single-mindedness—rather than by vigour of intellect. Though not quite *serafico in ardore*, he is such stuff as saints—not cardinals—are made of. I do not know whether the 'holy, blissful martire' is as much esteemed by Roman Catholics of to-day as he was in Chaucer's time; but, if so, both the poet's conception and the actor's rendering of it must, I should think, be eminently pleasing to the Ultramontane faction. To me, they are delightful from the point of view of pure poetry. In the three or four really vital scenes of the play, Tennyson has sketched a noble and touching figure, assigning to him many noble and touching speeches, full of the true Tennysonian melody. The history may be bad, the dramatic quality, even of these three or four scenes, is none of the highest—but the writing is exquisite. And to this exquisite writing Mr. Irving does ample, almost perfect, justice. Here he gives us—or at any rate gave us on the first night—clear-cut beautiful English speech in smooth-flowing, delicately-cadenced, poetic periods. Many of his lines and sequences of lines were a joy to the ear—one regretted the evanescence of their charm. It is true that Tennyson's blank verse, even in this play, is not dramatic in the fullest sense of the word, though he sought diligently to make it so. It lacks impetus and strength of wing; it is fragile, delicate, dreamy, rather than vivid and vehement; it is not quite free from some of the very undramatic mannerisms of the Idylls, such as, for instance, the trick of chiming repetitions. But, after all said and done, it is quite sufficiently dramatic to present a fascinating problem to any actor with an ear for verse and a faculty for diction. In one way it is obviously suited to Mr. Irving, for the very lack of impetus, the short-windedness, so to speak, which I have noted above, is the chief characteristic of his delivery. It might have been feared, however, that he would not succeed in imparting to it the smoothness and finish of phrasing without which it is naught; it might have been feared that he would seek to make it natural by making it

spasmodic. But no such matter! Mr. Irving shows himself acutely sensitive to the refinement and polish of the verse, delivering it with a smoothness I have never hitherto known him to attain."

And the *Saturday Review* published the following criticism on Irving as Becket:—

"It is not too much to say that the deep impression which Lord Tennyson's play has made, and is destined to make, is due in the largest measure to the commanding individuality and consummate art of Mr. Irving. This is high praise; but it will need no excuse to those who have studied the written play and have witnessed the performance at the Lyceum. An actor of less intelligence and intensity might easily have failed to bind together the scattered threads of the Laureate's work; and the employment of methods less convincing than those which Mr. Irving has at command might at any time have laid bare the slender fabric of the structure he is summoned to support. But from the first moment he appears upon the scene we are under the spell of a personality which seems to tell with equal force on both sides of the footlights. That spirit of authority which stays the uplifted swords of the turbulent Barons at Northampton belongs to the actor no less than to the character he assumes, and we feel it is by no mere stage command that their points are lowered and their voices stilled before his steadfast gaze. It is not always that an artist of such strongly marked individuality finds the full occasion for its exercise. There are parts, as there are plays, which demand the intervention of disguise; and it is a common impression among those who have not given much thought to the subject that an actor achieves his highest triumph when he succeeds in effacing his own personality. But this, in truth, is a triumph which he who essays to render the highest moods of drama most speedily discards. It is the fitting reward of an actor who is engaged in marking the distinctive types of character in comedy; but it must, perforce, be abandoned in any attempt to depict the larger and deeper passions that are common to humanity. Here the artist is of necessity thrown back upon himself; those minute and delicate touches that go to complete the portraiture of manners avail him nothing; and it is at this point, where disguise gives place to revelation, that we get the true measure of a great actor's resources. And it is here also, as we venture to think, that Mr. Irving stands without a rival among his fellows. In fact, the seeming effortless effort of the intense stillness by which Mr. Irving conveys intense passion, and that in many moods, may justly be called a triumph of acting. It is as easy to discover as it would be idle to deny those limitations of voice and gesture which sometimes mar his efforts on the stage; but when, as in the present instance, these physical idiosyncrasies are firmly controlled, there is no actor of his time who brings to his work the same extraordinary sense of reality and conviction. And in Becket these peculiar virtues of Mr. Irving's art find the most fortunate expression. If the change from the soldier to the zealot is not altogether convincing, that is rather the fault of the author than of the actor. This sudden revelation of the man's deeper nature needed the provocation of some more striking circumstance than Lord Tennyson has been able to supply; but from the moment when we are in the presence of

Becket, the fervid champion of the Church, the strength of the actor's impersonation wins at each step an added force and grip, until it culminates in the superbly acted scene which precedes and foreshadows his final martyrdom. Here Mr. Irving is at his best both as actor and manager. Nothing could have been more finely conceived in dramatic effect than the noiseless entry of the Barons into the Archbishop's chamber. As he utters the lines—

> On a Tuesday was I born, and on a Tuesday
> Baptized; and on a Tuesday came to me
> The ghostly warning of my martyrdom;
> And on a Tuesday—

we feel that these motionless and silent figures are but the phantoms of his dream recalled. The reality is no stronger than the vision; and when his eyes slowly turn there is no sudden start of surprise to find them there; for to him the room was already peopled with the agents of his doom before their bodily presence was made known. This is a touch of the highest art, and by its side may be set the wonderful expression of wearied incredulity with which he greets Henry's promises at Montmirail, and the mingled dignity and humbleness of bearing that mark the striking scene at the close of the third act."

The readers of this book know that as far back as 1879, Irving had considered the production of Tennyson's play, and that he had refused it. "In 1891," says Hallam, Lord Tennyson,[1] "he asked leave to produce it, holding that the taste of the theatre-going public had changed in the interval, and that it was now likely to be a success on the stage. He writes to me (April, 1893): 'We have passed the fiftieth performance of "Becket," which is in the heyday of its success. I think that I may without hereafter being credited with any inferior motive, give again the opinion which I previously expressed to your loved and honoured father. To me "Becket" is a very noble play, with something of that lofty feeling and that far-reaching influence which belongs to a "passion play". There are in it moments of passion and pathos which are the aim and end of dramatic art, and which, when they exist, atone to an audience for the endurance of long acts. Some of the scenes and passages, especially in the last act, are full of sublime feeling, and are with regard to both their dramatic effectiveness and their poetic beauty as fine as anything in our language. I

[1] "Alfred, Lord Tennyson, A Memoir by his son, 1897." Tennyson died on 6th October, 1892.

know that such a play has an ennobling influence on both the audience who see it and the actors who play in it.' Some of the last lines my father ever wrote are at the end of the Northampton scene, an anthem speech written for Irving."

Irving's friendship with Tennyson was of long standing. He certainly knew him well in the Summer of 1876, for in that month he stayed with him for some days at his home in the Isle of Wight, Farringford. And he always spoke of him with affection and admiration. In the course of a conversation in the autumn of 1894, he described Tennyson as "one of the dearest and best of friends. One of the most touching incidents which I remember occurred while he was on his deathbed. He turned to the physician, Dr. Dabbs, who told me of the incident, and said: 'I suppose I shall never see "Becket"?' 'I fear not,' said the doctor. 'They did not do me justice with "The Promise of May,"' said the dying poet, 'but Irving will do me justice in Becket.' 'Of that remark and confidence I am justly proud,'" Irving added. "Did you not once suggest to Lord Tennyson that the life of Dante would be a favourable theme for a play?" he was asked. "Yes. He at first seemed pleased with the subject, but after thinking for a few moments he said slowly, 'Yes, but where would you find a Dante to write it?' and he thereupon gave up the idea. His play of 'The Foresters' was originally written for us."

As many people will recall, Irving never tired of telling his audiences that "Becket" was "a noble play". And there is no doubt that the character influenced his last years. "Becket," he said on one occasion, "is a noble and a human part, and I will say that I do not see how any one could act it and feel it thoroughly without being a better man for it. It is full of some of the noblest thoughts and elements of introspection that may come to us in this life of ours." Irving's own account of the way in which he got permission to alter the piece, so as to make it available for the stage, is interesting: "On the appearance of 'Becket,' I pointed out to Tennyson that the poem seemed to me to have great possibilities if I could only get it into stage shape. I asked him if he would

allow it to be produced in an altered form, and he replied that I might do anything I pleased. Accordingly, I made such changes as I thought necessary, and sent it to him cut for the stage, and suggesting that he could make the changes, and this he did, adding a speech at the end of the first act." The speech in question is that already alluded to by the present Lord Tennyson. Irving's fine delivery of it will be long-remembered by all who witnessed his wonderfully impressive acting throughout the scene in Northampton Castle. None can forget how he became transfigured as he spoke the concluding words of this stirring scene :—

> And I bless
> The people, love them, live for them—and yet
> Not me, not me! they bless the Church in me,
> The voice of the people goes against the King.
> The voice of the Lord is in the voice of the People!

There are two points which should be borne in mind in connection with "Becket". In the first place, although the scenic effects were artistic this was not a production as that word is understood in theatrical phraseology. The account under that head amounted to the comparatively small sum of £4723 11s. 2d. Again, although no one would deny the charm of Miss Ellen Terry as Rosamund, the character is not an important one for a leading actress, and, in the latter years of Irving's career, the part was taken by other actresses without detriment to the success of the play. And, at first, Irving did not feel that the play was sufficiently strong for a long run. The programme for the first night of "Becket" announced that "King Lear" would be acted on every Monday night. "Becket" was played a hundred and twelve times during the first season, seventy-six performances of "King Lear" taking place. There were thirteen representations of "The Bells," four of "Much Ado About Nothing," three of "Charles the First," nine of "The Merchant of Venice," four of "Olivia," and seven of "The Lyons Mail". Tennyson's play was given on the last night of the season, Saturday, 22nd July.

"Becket" had hardly been launched, before Irving received

a command to present the piece before Queen Victoria. The announcement on the Lyceum programme ran :—

"Her Majesty the Queen

having commanded a performance of 'Becket' to be given at Windsor Castle, on Saturday, 18th March, the Lyceum Theatre will be closed on that evening". The performance took place in the Waterloo Chamber, and, as the stage was a very small one, the scenery for the occasion was specially prepared. Irving insisted on doing this at his own expense, nor would he accept any fee on behalf of himself or his company. In fact, the entire cost of everything in connection with the performance, save only the journey from London to Windsor and back, was borne by him. This, of course, helped to swell the general expenses of the season, and we find, strange as it appears at first sight, that he experienced a loss during this successful period of his management. His receipts for the two hundred and sixty-three performances were £75,372 14s. 9d. —a splendid average of over £280 for each representation— his expenses being £79,267 14s. 1d. Still, this included a general production account of over £13,000, and he was well-equipped with a large stock of magnificent scenery and other appointments for his tours of America and the provinces. During the next few months, America repaid him abundantly for his liberality and enterprise.

The fourth American tour, which occupied the autumn of this year and the first three months of 1894, was, in some respects, the most remarkable of all the visits to the United States. In the first place, it began in San Francisco, where the enthusiasm of the people was equalled by the receipts ; and these, as will be seen presently, were prodigious. A stay of five weeks was made in Chicago, and the first engagement in New York lasted for eight weeks. Apart from the scenery and properties required for "The Bells" and "Nance Oldfield," there were eight productions, including "Henry VIII." and "Much Ado About Nothing". This bold policy was fully justified by the results. It meant, if possible, harder work than ever, but Irving, soon after the close of his London

season, took a complete rest. Accompanied by Miss Ellen Terry, her daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Loveday, he enjoyed a holiday in Canada, whither he went direct from England, Mr. Stoker and the company sailing from Southampton for New York, prior to the five days' journey across the American continent, on 19th August. Beginning on 4th September, fourteen performances were given in San Francisco, for which the public paid precisely $59,535, Irving's share of this vast sum amounting to £7,995 8s. In other words, his share each night amounted to over £570—an amazing sum. His total receipts for the tour were £74,749 12s. His expenses, as usual, were heavy—£50,418 6s., but, withal, there was the handsome profit of £24,330 16s. The number of performances given was 194, and the gross takings amounted to the tremendous sum of $597,474 59c., or £123,445 3s. 4d., an average of $3070 12c., or over £600 sterling a performance. The following statement shows that, although "Becket" was new to America, it did not exceed the popularity of "The Merchant of Venice".

	Performances.	$ c.	£ s. d.	Average per Performance. $ c.
"The Merchant of Venice"	51	174,581 50	36,070 11 2	3,423 16
"Becket"	59	181,986 0	37,600 8 3	3,084 50
"The Bells" and "Nance Oldfield"	20	61,763 50	12,761 1 1	3,083 67
"The Lyons Mail"	7	18,551 50	3,832 19 1	2,650 21
"Olivia"	10	30,544 50	6,310 16 11	3,054 45
"Charles the First"	4	11,009 0	2,274 11 9	2,752 25
"Louis XI."	16	45,251 50	9,349 9 8	2,828 21
"Henry VIII."	20	52,230 50	10,791 8 6	2,611 52
"Much Ado About Nothing"	7	19,686 50	4,067 9 2	2,812 35
	194	$595,604 50	£123,058 15 7	$3,070 12
Sale of Books		1,870 9	386 7 9	
		$597,474 59	£123,445 3 4	

Comment on such figures is superfluous. This remarkable tour began on 4th September and ended on 17th March. The following are the dates, cities and theatres of the tour :

In 1893, San Francisco, Cal., Grand Opera House, 4th to 16th September, 2 weeks; Portland, Ore., Portland Theatre, 18th to 19th September, 2 days; Tacoma, Wash., Tacoma Theatre, 20th September, 1 day; Seattle, Wash., Seattle Theatre, 21st September, 1 day; Minneapolis, Minn., Lyceum Theatre, 25th to 27th September, 3 days; St. Paul, Minn., Metropolitan Opera House, 28th to 30th September, 3 days; Chicago, Ill., Columbia Theatre, 2nd October to 4th November, 5 weeks; New York, N.Y., Abbey's Theatre, 6th November to 30th December, 8 weeks. In 1894, Boston, Mass., Tremont Theatre, 1st to 27th January, 4 weeks; Philadelphia, Pa., Chestnut Street Opera House, 29th January to 10th February, 2 weeks; Washington, Albaugh's Grand Opera House, 12th to 17th February, 1 week; Toronto, Grand Opera House, Montreal, Academy of Music, 19th to 24th February, 3 nights each; New York, Abbey's Theatre, 26th February to 10th March, 2 weeks; Boston, Tremont Theatre, 12th to 17th March, 1 week.

The opening programme in San Francisco consisted of "The Bells" and "Nance Oldfield". The other pieces presented during this engagement were "The Merchant of Venice," "Becket," "Olivia," "Charles the First," "The Lyons Mail," and "Louis XI." With such a splendid programme, there was no occasion to transport the heavy scenery for "Henry VIII." and "Much Ado About Nothing" across the American continent. On the Sunday which intervened between the work in the theatre, Irving underwent the hilarious experience of being initiated into the "high jinks" of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco—a society of the best men in the literary and artistic world of California, renowned for the hospitality which they extended to the distinguished stranger within the Golden Gate. In Irving's case, the Bohemians spared no thought or labour in order to show their appreciation of the English actor. He was met at the entrance to the Club house by a committee of the most prominent members. As he approached, the jingle of bells

in the distance was heard. As he ascended the steps, "nearer the jingle came. Then other bells sounded, Chinese gongs, then deep-toned shells and brazen cymbals added their vibrant sounds until, when the guest of the evening stood at the head of the landing, the air was filled with their crashing and clanging." Fortunately "the guest of the evening" was in perfect health and he was able to enter into the festivities with a light heart. The banqueting-hall was elaborately decorated in gold—yellow silk and Japanese gold-embroidered cloth covered the tables. "The candelabra were all gold, and on the table rested a profusion of eschscholtizeas, sunflowers and marigolds strewn with studied carelessness down the centre. Pitched from one end of the table in heaped-up profusion by the artistic hand of Amedée Joulin was a pile of all kinds of rich, ripe fruit, stretching from the fern and leaf-hidden basket in thinning strings the whole length of the table. In the fruit lay yellow roses, sunflowers, and big velvety leaves languid in their tropical verdancy." The dinner was of the most gorgeous nature, but, in the midst of all the luxury, the artistic note was prominent. In a corner of the room, a bronze bust of Shakespeare was surrounded by the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes, and the invitation, painted in oils, "Please you, great sir, Bohemia greets you," was indeed a thing of art. The speeches were short, but inspired by good feeling, and, at the subsequent "high jinks," presided over by George T. Bromley, Irving delighted the Bohemians by reciting "Little Tommy". It was a joyous night.

A memorable feature of the American tour of 1893-94, was the invitation to Irving to deliver an address before the students of Harvard University during the final week of the tour, when he was playing in Boston. The Sanders Memorial Theatre of the University was packed on the afternoon of 15th March when Irving discoursed on "Individuality"—"I would hardly call this an address," he explained. "It is more —I might say—a conversation." The actor was introduced by Dean Briggs, who said: "A friend who has given delight

to the world over has come again to our corner of the world to show a generous courtesy to Harvard University. We welcome Mr. Henry Irving." The theme of his address was, "Be sufficient unto yourself". He received, in the words of the Boston *Herald*, "a royal welcome. The new Harvard Union has made itself famous by welcoming such a man. Long ago, every available ticket was disposed of. Some hour or two before the doors of Sanders' Theatre were opened, there was a tremendous jam outside. It was a distinguished crowd, mostly students, of course, but with a sprinkling of Annex girls, and a considerable number of the faculty and their families. Such a scrambling for seats was never seen, even when the doors are opened on class day. The students were liveliest and got the best, of course, though their Annex sisters were by no means lost in the rush. . . . All listened to Mr. Irving with the closest attention. Everybody respected his desire not to be interrupted. But when he was finished, the bent of enthusiasm was no longer to be restrained" and it vented itself in continuous applause and "Harvard's three times three sonorous cheers" followed the actor as he entered his carriage. On the same evening, Irving played Mathias, and, after the second act of "The Bells," a deputation waited upon him and presented him with a gold medal in celebration of the event of the afternoon. On the conclusion of the Boston engagement, the leading citizens of that city presented him with an address, speeches being made on that occasion by Mr. Curtis Guild and Mr. W. W. Ball. On the following Monday, the 19th, he was given a farewell dinner in New York, at Delmonico's; Senator Chauncey M. Depew, M. Mounet-Sully, Mr. William Winter, Mr. Charles A. Dana, and General Horace Porter spoke on that occasion. On the 21st, Irving, Miss Terry, and the Lyceum Company left New York on the *Majestic*.

CHAPTER XII.

April to December, 1894.

The 500th representation of "Faust" on the Lyceum stage—An interesting supper—A French writer's impressions of Irving—His play of feature—"A Story of Waterloo" enacted for the first time—Irving's exceptional audiences—An address on "Municipal Theatres"—"The Cinderella of the Arts"—A reference to Gladstone—The *Scotsman's* great praise of Irving—More reminiscences of "Hamlet"—And of Edinburgh—The dying professor—A touching scene—Remarkable scenes in Dublin—"Cead mille failthe"—A triumphal engagement—"Becket" in Manchester—Receipts for the tour.

IRVING re-opened the Lyceum on 14th April—when he began his eighteenth season there—with "Faust," which was then acted for the 431st time at that theatre. In June, a memorable event—the 500th representation of "Faust" at the Lyceum took place. Seventy-six performances of Goethe's tragedy were given before the end of July. "Becket" was acted eleven times, and, on the last night of the season, 21st July, "The Merchant of Venice" was played.

One of the most interesting of the suppers in the old Beefsteak Club rooms of the Lyceum occurred during this season. The company included the noted French critic, the late Francisque Sarcey, M. Jules Claretie, M. Coquelin the younger, the composer of "Mephistofele," Signor Boïto, and Sir (then Mr.) Squire Bancroft. A well-known Paris journalist, M. Adolphe Brisson, who was also one of Irving's guests, formed this impression of his host: "On seeing Irving enter, smiling, yet grave, and wearing that expression of somewhat reserved dignity which never deserts him, I recognised in this artist the legitimate heir of Kean and Garrick, and knew that I saw before me a worthy representative of the race of actor princes." M. Brisson also saw Irving as Becket, and, in a

few eloquent words, he summed up some of the most notable of his characteristics as an actor: "His countenance is marked by rare delicacy and nobility. It assumes every expression, interprets every shade of emotion through which the hero passes—sorrow, faith, anger, resignation. I do not understand the dialogue very clearly, but I can guess its import, so eloquent is the artist's play of feature. His eye, especially, is marvellous—at once sacerdotal and royal, severe and tender, despotic and caressing, full of lightnings and of benedictions, the eye of a Pope or an Emperor, the eye of one born to influence his fellow-men. Add to this an incomparable nobility of attitude and gesture, and you will have some idea of this dramatic genius, of whom no French actor is quite equivalent. Irving is Mounet-Sully, with less splendour and plastic beauty, but with something more profound. I know of nothing which could surpass the last picture in 'Becket,' when the Archbishop, ready to fall by the daggers of his murderers, forgives the crime they are about to commit, and raises to heaven his eyes full of hope and agony. How it thrilled the theatre!"

On 17th September, Irving began, at Bristol, a tour of the provinces which included Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dublin, and ended at Manchester on 15th December. During the first week of this tour, he acted a character which became one of his most artistic and popular performances—Corporal Gregory Brewster in "A Story of Waterloo," the first representation occurring at the Prince's Theatre, Bristol, on Friday evening, 21st September, 1894. Curiously enough, he played this part for the first time in London at the Garrick Theatre—not the Lyceum—on 17th December, of the same year, at a charity matinée. And, still more curiously, the last time that he appeared on the London stage was in this character, at His Majesty's Theatre, at a performance for the benefit of an old friend, the veteran comedian, Mr. Lionel Brough. Many critics of the London and provincial press betook themselves to Bristol for the first appearance of Irving as the old soldier, and long accounts of

the performance appeared in the London and provincial newspapers on the following day.

The tour was a triumph for Irving, inasmuch as he then introduced "Becket" to the provinces, and, during more than half of it, Miss Ellen Terry, being in need of a rest, was absent, her place in the company being taken, as on a former occasion, by Miss Marion Terry. The exceptional nature of the audiences which Irving attracted was a cause of constant comment. "Becket" was his opening play in Bristol. "As far as possible," said the *Western Daily Press*, "Mr. Irving brings the Lyceum with him on his provincial tours. He brings, that is, the completeness and dignity with which it is the noble tradition of the Lyceum Theatre to illustrate great dramatic works. There can have been few in last night's audience who have not had some opportunity of seeing the performance of plays at the Lyceum itself, and they cannot fail to have been struck by the care, intelligence, and success with which a Lyceum performance was last evening repeated. And it was evident, also, that the resemblance to the Lyceum extended to both sides of the curtain. It is the fortune, or rather, the reward of Mr. Irving to collect in the provinces as well as in London audiences who are not to be lightly attracted, and who are able to bring to the theatre a capacity of intellectual and, so to speak, serious enjoyment of finely produced works of dramatic art. Much has been said and written of the elevation of the drama, but the process itself is revealed in such performances as are associated with Mr. Irving's theatre in London, and with his visits to other parts of the country. Mr. Irving has ever sought to realise that the works that he produces shall have such a setting as that of which an intelligent reader of the plays is dimly conscious. None of us can read a play of Shakespeare or any other great dramatist without being, half insensibly, influenced by the surroundings, the atmosphere, so to speak, suggested by the text, the characters, the situations. And it has been one of the great triumphs of Mr. Irving's career that when he has produced these plays he has made it possible for us to feel a sense of completeness, and

to realise that here, indeed, in all its magnificence and appropriateness, is the setting the play required. This is a matter of far more than mere spectacular splendour. For this might overwhelm even a good play, and Shakespeare himself might be crowded off the stage by the scene painter and the stage carpenter. But the true art is that which can enable a performance to appeal by eye and ear alike to the demands of a sensitive taste, and it is this that makes a Lyceum representation remarkable".

The visit to Birmingham was an exceptionally busy one, for not only did Irving appear as Becket, Mephistopheles, Corporal Brewster, Mathias, and Shylock, but he gave an address at the Walsall Literary Institute, of which he was the President. He chose as his theme a subject to which he frequently adverted in the succeeding years—"Municipal Theatres". His address was to the point, sensible, and touched with a humour all his own, as when he said "I do not feel in propounding this idea of municipal management I am proposing the inhuman sacrifice of the particular class I represent. My brother managers will probably remain undisturbed by the prospect of a municipal theatre here and there in the great centres of population. But it is an experiment which for many reasons is worth a trial. Money is spent in this country like water on a great variety of philanthropic and educational objects. Scholarships are founded for the pursuit of learning; there are handsome endowments for schools of painting and colleges of music; but who ever dreams of endowing a theatre? Literary and scientific institutions profit by the munificence of millionaires. I am glad that it is so: I should rejoice still more if some of this wealth were bestowed on a school of dramatic art. The drama is the Cinderella of the arts, a little jealous of the consideration shown to her sisters, and waiting for the fairy godfather, be he millionaire or municipality, to turn the pumpkin into a coach and six, to train actors, to uphold a consistently high standard of literature, and to preserve the distinction between the true form of the drama and the various entertainments which pass under its name.

This is a project to which the millionaire, in his leisure moments, if he has any, might devote some attention. I am not very well acquainted with the psychology of millionaires, but if I were possessed of an enormous sum per annum in excess of my simple wants, I could conceive no greater delight than to carry on a theatre with a single-minded devotion to dramatic art. But the grace and bounty of the millionaire are otherwise bestowed; and, on the whole, it would be more to the advantage of the community to feel that the theatre was a department of the public service than to see it dependent on individual beneficence."

At the conclusion of his plea, he touched upon a point which has now become evident to many playgoers—the necessity for a theatre where the ambitious actor could practise his calling. "I confess that what appeals to me most forcibly in this enterprise is the opportunity it would offer for the thorough cultivation of the actor's art, and for the occasional production of plays which, under the present system, are rarely seen, because they cannot be expected to make any remunerative return. For actors, the advantages of a permanent school would be invaluable. Training and discipline are absolutely necessary to achieve perfection in any art, and Goethe's complaint against the impatience of discipline in his day is applicable to our own time. . . . I remember that in an interesting conversation I had with Mr. Gladstone on this subject he expressed the opinion that the religious prejudices against the drama were fading away, and that such an experiment as I have sketched would have an excellent chance of commanding public favour.[1] I am glad to be sustained by so eminent an authority, and I venture to think that anybody who seriously and dispassionately considers the drama in its intimate relation to the social life of the people will acknowledge that there is a strong case for adopting it formally amongst the agencies of instruction and recreation

[1] "I have always thought," Gladstone wrote, in 1878, to one of Irving's literary friends, "that there are strong arguments—among them some which may be drawn from the existence of institutions like the Royal Academy—to show that the drama requires, in order to its prosperity, some great centre of attraction and of elevation."

which are already classed in the sacred category of public works."

Until he played Becket in Edinburgh on 22nd October, Irving had not been in Edinburgh for three years. His return to a city which was ever dear to him was the occasion for a great demonstration of approval. Both press and public united in testifying to his work in the cause of his beloved art. "Mr. Irving," said the *Scotsman*, "is entitled to the gratitude of every lover of the drama for what he has done for his fascinating and humanising art. To him we are indebted for the best representations of Shakespearean tragedy and comedy that the present generation has seen; he has dignified melodrama; in his latest achievement he has made popular the poetic drama of Tennyson; and to him, more than to any other actor-manager, we owe the great elevation of taste which has taken place in connection with the setting of plays, and that gracious combination with the dramatic art of the sister arts of painting and music. It would be singular indeed if Edinburgh, an art and educational centre, did not welcome Mr. Irving on the occasion of his stated visits to the city; for not only can it appreciate his later work, but it may remember with pride that the capital of Scotland is the cradle of his art, and that in one of its theatres he received that thorough professional training which he has since turned to such admirable account. Mr. Irving has long since lived down all the ungenerous, carping criticisms with which he was at one time assailed in certain quarters. He stands out the most gifted actor of his time; and it may be hoped that his visit to Edinburgh will be so successful that he may be led at no distant date to return to the scene of his early triumphs. The play last night moved with a stately grandeur. The large audience felt that they were in presence of a noble work superbly acted. Mr. Irving himself was distinctly great. His Becket is a personality to be vividly remembered, along with certain of his other characters, in which, by common consent, he has transcendently excelled."

In speaking of his other impersonations, especially his Mathias—which he had played in Edinburgh more than

twenty years before—the same authority was exceedingly gracious. In reviewing the engagement as a whole, it alluded to Irving's power of drawing to the theatre those people who were not frequenters of the playhouse: "It has helped to sharpen up the intellectual life of the city, and, by lifting current theatrical art upon a high plane, has tended, it may be hoped, permanently to influence it for good. It is a high tribute to his art that on this as on other occasions upon which he has appeared people have been seen in theatres who otherwise rarely darken its doors. Not a few Edinburgh clergymen, for example, have been to the theatre to see Mr. Irving in the part of the great twelfth-century ecclesiastic, Becket. Similarly, many ladies and gentlemen who rarely go to the play have appeared in all parts of the house to witness the impersonation of some one or two of Mr. Irving's famous characters. This is a distinctly interesting fact in connection with Mr. Irving's engagement, and shows that the antiquated prejudice against the theatre as one of the great social necessities of the age, alike as an educative and entertaining agency in city life, is slowly but surely giving way."

The good wishes of the *Scotsman* were realised in every way, for the Edinburgh engagement was a distinct commerical success. It was interesting for other reasons than artistic and financial ones. It brought out some valuable reminiscences, and it showed Irving in a touching light at the bedside of a dying friend. On Wednesday, 31st October, the Pen and Pencil Club profited by the presence of the actor in Edinburgh to give him a supper in the Waterloo Rooms. The chairman, Mr. G. W. Barclay, in proposing the toast of the evening, reminded his fellow members that they were assembled on the twentieth anniversary of the first appearance of their guest in London as Hamlet. Irving's reply was delightfully autobiographical. "Hamlet," he said, "has all my life been to me a fascinating study. When I was a boy I loved it, I suppose for the beauty of its language. It was beyond my reach to realise or to guess at its thought. When I was a young man, I found its love and knowledge and understanding walking

with me with equal footsteps; and when I was twenty-five I essayed to play it. But in the trial I realised its magnificent difficulty; and it was not for another ten years, when study and practice in a larger field had given me either greater confidence or greater recklessness, that I felt able to attempt it in London. It is evidence of the abiding strength of this play in the hearts of the people that though, at the time to which your chairman so kindly alluded, it was hurriedly put on the stage, with but very little expense—some of the scenery having been used in other plays—and with only such care as can be used within a very short period, it achieved a longer run than was ever thought possible. My excellent manager at that time did not much believe in it, and at most expected a run of a few weeks; but it ran for two hundred nights." On the same occasion, the actor recalled his early days in Edinburgh: "I spent here some of the most interesting and pleasant years of my life, for it was here that I learnt to become an actor, and was used to study my parts on Arthur's Seat amid the beautiful surroundings of Holyrood."

Irving's one trouble during this engagement in Edinburgh was the thought that he might never again see one of his best friends, John Stuart Blackie. The two men had held each other in mutual esteem and affectionate regard for nearly a score of years. Professor Blackie had an intense sympathy for the stage, and, at a dinner in Edinburgh in 1876, had defended the drama in a speech of such singular vigour that it drew from Irving a characteristic letter. "For myself," he wrote to Blackie, "I became an actor because I loved the drama, and every word said in its behalf, as a great social power to elevate mankind, finds an echo in my heart. Tens of thousands feel the influence of the theatre during the six days of the week—against the pulpit with only one day, and with relatively few listeners, and, knowing this, all true moralists wish that this great power may be used for good." Thus were the player and the professor united by sympathy and friendship. When Irving was acting in Edinburgh in the autumn of 1894, the Professor, then in his eighty-sixth year, was on his death-bed.

"Henry Irving," wrote Blackie's biographer, "stooped to kiss his brow as he bade him good-bye. The Professor took the great actor's hand and kissed it." On Blackie's coffin, four months later, was laid a wreath of violets from the actor "To the beloved Professor".

Irving proceeded from Edinburgh to Glasgow, where Miss Ellen Terry, having recovered from her indisposition, resumed her place in the company. While he was winning further triumphs in the latter city, a curious scene was enacted in Dublin, where Irving had last played in October, 1881. His engagement in 1894 was for two weeks, beginning on 19th November. On the 5th of that month, when the booking for the Irving fortnight began, one of the most extraordinary scenes that was ever witnessed in Dublin took place in Westmoreland Street. Between one and two hundred ladies and gentlemen were soon engaged in a fierce struggle to get to the window of the booking office. It reminded the Dublin *Evening Telegraph* more of a football match than anything else. Novel was it to see those who so comfortably occupy reserved seats having to fight for them in the same manner as those who win seats in the pit. One gentleman fainted; a lady had to be helped out. The box-office of the theatre was smashed by the weight of men and women against it; all the glass in it was broken, and ultimately the semi-circular top of the framework was pitched over on the heads of those who were handing out tickets. Among those seen struggling in the crowd were Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, a member of Parliament, several Queen's Counsel, and many other well-known residents of Dublin. The Irving fever continued until the actor had left the city. On his arrival, he was enthusiastically received by a large crowd, and, strange to relate, many people were so scared by the announcement that the theatre would be "besieged" and that "barriers had been put up to stem the tide of intending playgoers," that the pit was not quite full on the first night. The incident of people staying away in order "to avoid the crowd" is curious. But the gallery was soon filled to overflowing, and the reserved portions of the house

were packed to their utmost capacity. Never, perhaps, had so representative an audience assembled within the walls of the Gaiety Theatre; never had the great actor received a warmer welcome. At the conclusion of "Becket," he was compelled to make a brief speech. "I once," he said, "learnt a few Irish words, and have ever remembered them. They were—I am afraid I cannot pronounce them correctly—'cead mille failthe'. They speak to-day, as they spoke centuries ago, and in repeating them—as well as I can—I feel that you have spoken them to me to-night."

Nor was the press of Dublin behindhand in its enthusiasm. "Some thirteen years," said the *Irish Times*, "have passed since Mr. Henry Irving first trod the boards of the Gaiety Theatre, and although in the interim he has not been a stranger to us—sharing in the enjoyments of the Tercentenary celebrations of Trinity College, when he renewed valued associations with many old friends and warm admirers, and was one of the most honoured among the University's guests—it was the grateful privilege of a great and representative audience last night to bid him a fresh and vigorous Irish welcome. Nor was the gathering upon which his glance rested upon the rising of the curtain an ordinary one. It included the representatives of the best-known circles of literature and art. . . . The play is a magnificent commentary upon the poem—is in itself a literary treasure which no modern actor save the one could have endowed the world with. The death of 'Becket' is a thrilling scene—the consummation of this grand tragedy which, in the hands of such interpreters, can never fail to teach and to move." According to the *Freeman's Journal*, "the splendid effect of the performance was beyond question, the creation less of Tennyson than of Irving. No better tribute to the genius of an actor could well be suggested than his success in this part of 'Becket,' and, indeed, so strikingly is that fact made manifest that no one who was present last night can fail to be impressed with the fact that it is above all things a one-part play, and that Mr. Irving has, in one sense at least, transcended himself."

But although "Becket" was well received in Dublin, its success did not overshadow that of "The Merchant of Venice" —Irving's Shylock, indeed, was his most potent attraction until the end of his career. "Many years," wrote the *Irish Times*, "have passed since the Dublin public last enjoyed the privilege of witnessing Mr. Irving in the noblest, save one, of his Shakespeare studies, nor could there possibly have been exhibited a higher or more spontaneous tribute to his genius than the anxiety shown to revive recollections of a dramatic conception which for all the lapse of time has never been forgotten. Since the first Irving presentations, the play has many times been performed by actors of distinguished capacity, but it has been reserved for the noblest of them all to instruct all people fitly to reverence the play as a pearl of pearls, of much price, and to create a love and knowledge of it which everywhere is cherished. No one who followed with close attention Mr. Irving's interpretation of the drama last night, one that in every sense is controlled by his master hand and judgment, can fail to be thoroughly impressed by the general character and judicious grasp of his reading of it. For all its tragic happenings, there is never obscured the light and zephyr which illumines all its acts, all its motive, all its glow and wealth of characterisation. Mr. Irving has, in his time, played many parts, but we can recall none in which his power of fathoming the true Shakespeare conception, as we largely, by his help, have learned to comprehend it, is greater, more acute, more intimate, than in this. He strikes all the chords of passion, and reveals a character which, previous to the Irving period, had not been expounded upon the stage. Mr. Irving's Jew is not quite that which we have seen on Dublin boards before. None of the forceful passion has been lost, not any of those delicate touches of which he is so grand a master have been missed. But the conception is a better, and, perhaps, a quieter one, for old experience has attained to something of the prophetic strain—to the making of an indelible mark upon the course of all future Shakespeare study, whether in the closet or upon the boards."

The Dublin engagement was, in short, a triumph, from

Photo: Lock and Whitfield, London.

SHYLOCK.

every point of view. Irving was the chief guest at the first supper of the 125th session of the Trinity College Historical Society, Lord Justice Fitzgibbon taking the chair. He had to attend a reception at the Mansion House given by the Lady Mayoress in honour of himself and Miss Terry; and, on another occasion, he accepted an invitation to be present at a meeting of the Dublin Corporation, all the members of which rose as he entered. But the most brilliant scene of all was that witnessed on the night of Saturday, 1st December, when the engagement came to an end. Soon after the conclusion of the performance, the curtain was raised, discovering, in a semi-circle, a group of a hundred prominent citizens, with Henry Irving and Miss Terry on one side. The Lord Mayor, on behalf of an influential committee, presented the actor with an address written by Professor Edward Dowden. "Your last visit," his lordship said, "was for the purpose of receiving a distinguished honour from the University of Dublin; to-night, its citizens are assembled to pay you and Miss Terry this tribute."

"Many years ago," said this address to Irving, "we were among those who recognised in you the chief interpreter for our generation of the dramatic art. We have watched your career since then with admiration, and almost with a feeling of personal pride. Your fame and the common delight which you have given on each side of the Atlantic have linked the lovers of art in two hemispheres. Your renderings of works by the greatest poet of the Victorian age have bound together the literatures of the past and of the present. We ourselves through the dramatic writings of an Irish poet, the author of Charles I., have had a share in your achievements. Your work has been not merely that of instinct and genius; it has also been that of intellect and scholarly study. You have proved your power to interpret not alone the extremes of human passion, but also the depth and subtleties of thought. Our Lear upon the heath has also been our Hamlet lost in the mysteries of meditation. Your gaiety in comedy has been heightened by the grace of romantic fantasy. Your tragic

power has discovered a law and temperance in the violence of emotion. We also recognise with rare satisfaction that you have conceived the drama, not as written to provide a part for one eminent actor, but as a complex unity, as a large collaboration, and your conception has been realised by your talented company. You have not snatched at brilliant fragments, but have conceived and worthily presented a whole, harmonised in all its various details, and thus in transcending the egotism of the artist you have given an example of what is the finest moral distinction of art." The recipient of this testimony to his work made a brief reply. "Throughout my working life," he said, "the quick and subtle sympathy of your race has been to me both an incentive and a reward. Now, when your great University has accepted me to the brotherhood of her sons, and when your city and your nation have taken me to your hearts, I feel that the cup of a player's honour is full to the brim. The event of this evening cannot lightly pass, for our calling will be grateful to you, who, abandoning the narrow traditions of the past, have extended to their art so great an honour. The sweetness of your greeting to Miss Ellen Terry is worthy of the chivalrous natures and the honeyed lips of the countrymen of Burke and Grattan, of Sheridan, Shiel and Moore." A dense crowd had assembled outside the threatre, and the recipient of so much honour was frantically cheered on the whole of his way to the Shelburne Hotel.

From Dublin, Irving crossed to Manchester, where, during the two weeks beginning on 3rd December—generally speaking, one of the worst periods in the theatrical year—he completely filled the Theatre Royal, his share of the receipts amounting to £437 1 6s. 6d. "So eager is the demand for seats," said the *Courier* of 4th December, "that though the prices have been increased the stalls could have been extended far back into the pit. Rarely has the Royal presented a more crowded and brilliant appearance than it did last night, when 'Becket' was performed for the first time in Manchester. There is something singularly fascinating in Mr. Irving's personality, and the perfection and completeness of his stage creations are

simply wonderful. His Becket will live in the memory of everybody who has the good fortune to see it as a masterly, impressive, and finished conception. The figure seems not only to stand conspicuously pre-eminent, but to pervade all its surroundings. It almost completely absorbs attention, and absolutely overshadows even the important personages with whom it comes in contact. It is a grand conception, and is invested at times with almost appalling solemnity and gloom. It would be interesting to consider to what extent the splendid scenery and the rich elaboration of the surroundings contribute to the depth and strength of the effect produced. The great scenes of the tragedy are pictures of surprising solidity and beauty. In the last scene of all, in which Becket is slain, an involutary shudder ran through the house as the dead body rolled down the chancel steps, and it seemed like a welcome relief to burst into applause in recognition of the great actor's triumph. Mr. Irving looked the part of Becket, with his solemn, careworn features, to perfection. There was the suggestion of age and weariness in his voice until, in the passage with the King and his bearers, in which he defies their power, he delivered himself with all that force and eloquence of which he is capable." While in Manchester, Irving was entertained by the Arts Club, of which he was president. In replying to the toast of his health, he took occasion to remark that, far from being an enemy of the music-halls, as had been asserted, he often enjoyed the performances to be had in them. What he contended was that the artistic conditions of the music-halls and those of the theatre were not identical.

It is interesting to note the amounts paid by the public in order to witness the various plays. It will be seen that, although "Becket" was the chief novelty of this thirteen weeks' tour, "The Merchant of Venice" was a great attraction. It should be borne in mind that the following figures represent Irving's share, not the entire receipts :—

	Performances.	£	s.	d.
"Becket"	29	8,030	11	0
"Faust"	15	4,090	5	6
"The Merchant of Venice" (alone)	10	2,902	8	0
"The Merchant of Venice" and "A Story of Waterloo"	5	1,628	8	6
"The Lyons Mail" and "A Story of Waterloo"	5	1,538	9	0
"A Story of Waterloo," "Nance Oldfield," and (recitation) "The Dream of Eugene Aram"	1	311	8	0
"The Bells" and "A Story of Waterloo"	8	2,638	12	6
"The Bells" and "Nance Oldfield"	5	1,851	15	6
	78	£22,991	18	0

The following books were sold on this tour: Books of "Becket," 816; souvenirs of "Becket," 351; books of "The Merchant of Venice," 165.

CHAPTER XIII.

January to July, 1895.

An auspicious beginning of the year—"King Arthur" produced—Its literary and dramatic value—Irving's "King Arthur"—"A combination of poetry and humanity—Address at the Royal Institution—The Art of Acting—An attack of influenza—Gregory Brewster and Don Quixote at the Lyceum—A modern critic on those impersonations—Henry Irving knighted—Gladstone's satisfaction—Special congratulations from France—America writes endorsing the honour—Irving receives the accolade—His description of the scene—"It gives me very great pleasure, sir"—Address from his fellow-players—His modest reply—Letter to Mr. Pinero—End of a memorable season.

THE year now commencing was a memorable one in the history of the British stage for, thanks to Henry Irving, the theatre of this country was at last honoured by the Court. During the triumphal progress of the provinces in the autumn, the want of official recognition of the stage had been frequently present in Irving's mind, and, when the opportunity served, he put his thoughts into vigorous language and to good purpose. He had also been supervising the details for his New Year's production at the Lyceum, and, early in January, he was one of the house party invited by Sir Edward Lawson (now Lord Burnham) to meet the Prince of Wales (Edward VII.) and the Duke of York (now Prince of Wales) at Hall Barn, Beaconsfield, Bucks. "King Arthur" redounded to his credit, both as actor and manager, and the fifth tour of America, which began in the autumn, was a progress of honours and prosperity. In the ten years which intervened before his death, he had more than a fair share of trouble. Yet, excepting on purely personal grounds, these years are not to be regretted—certainly, he never complained of them—for they brought out the intense affection for him of the

people of the old and of the new worlds which he had conquered. After all, as he said once, "life has its compensations," and he lived to see his life's labours recognised, leaving to his successors on the stage the difficult task of following worthily in his wake.

Through force of circumstances, which will be related in due course, he could not include "King Arthur" in the repertory of his closing years, and, for this reason, the play in question hardly met with its proper recognition in the multifarious records which appeared in the newspaper press at the time of the actor's death. It may, therefore, be useful to contrast the opinion of two critics, who, as such, are typical of the old and the new schools—Sir Edward Russell, a critic by nature, experience, and practice, of acting, and Mr. William Archer, who described "King Arthur" as "a splendid pageant and folk-play." "These," he said, and he apparently had no desire to err on the side of lavish praise, "are the ingredients of the dish served up at the Lyceum and hugely relished by the audience. 'King Arthur' is a genuine success, of that there is no doubt; and it deserves its fortune. In producing such a work, Mr. Irving is putting his opportunities and resources to a worthy use. In the historic or legendary pageant-play, he seems to have found the formula best suited to the present stage of his career. On this path, at any rate, he marches from success to success—from 'Henry VIII.' to 'Becket,' from 'Becket' to 'King Arthur'. Mr. Comyns Carr, it is true, is neither Shakespeare, Fletcher, nor Tennyson. We miss not only the distinction of style, but the large dramatic movement which even Tennyson succeeded in imparting to one or two of his scenes. On the other hand, Mr. Carr writes very creditable blank verse, correct, and by no means lacking in dignified sonority; and he knows how to put a play together much better than Tennyson ever did, or than Shakespeare cared to in 'Henry VIII.'"

This was not very laudatory, it is true, but it was something, and sufficiently satisfactory from a writer with such pronounced views concerning other dramatists as Mr. Archer

is known to possess. On the other hand, Sir Edward Russell, in a leading article in the Liverpool *Daily Post*, took up the subject with authority and decision. "There is a point," he wrote, "to be settled about the new 'King Arthur'. Is it poetry? This is important, not only in justice to Mr. Comyns Carr, who wrote it, but because it is of value to a country that there should be poets to write for its stage. Some of the criticisms have decided the matter very roughly—by derogatory assertion. Others by malapert citations, as if any play could

KING ARTHUR.

First acted at the Lyceum, 12th January, 1895.

King Arthur	Mr. Irving.
Sir Lancelot	Mr. Forbes Robertson.
Sir Mordred	Mr. Frank Cooper.
Sir Kay	Mr. Tyars.
Sir Gawaine	Mr. Clarence Hague.
Sir Bedevere	Mr. Fuller Mellish.
Sir Agravaine	Mr. Lacy.
Sir Percivale	Mr. Buckley.
Sir Lavaine	Mr. Julius Knight.
Sir Dagonet	Mr. Harvey.
Merlin	Mr. Sydney Valentine.
Messenger	Mr. Belmore.
Gaoler	Mr. Tabb.
Morgan Le Fay	Miss Geneviève Ward.
Elaine	Miss Lena Ashwell.
Clarissant	Miss Annie Hughes.
Spirit of the Lake	Miss Maud Milton.
Guinevere	Miss Ellen Terry.

Prologue, Excalibur; Scene. The Magic Mere. Act I., the Holy Grail; Scene. The Great Hall at Camelot. Act II., the Queen's Maying; Scene. The Whitethorn Wood. Act III., the Black Barge; Scene. The Tower above the River at Camelot. Act IV., the Passing of Arthur; Scene 1. The Queen's Prison at Camelot; Scene 2. The Great Hall at Camelot.

or should be equal throughout, and as if all the characters must needs speak in the same lofty tone. A piece that is for acting in these days must be prepared with judgment and restraint, and Mr. Comyns Carr did not attempt to write a play that would be pronounced so poetical as to be unactable. But it is a worthy gratification to find that a dramatic author writing under stage conditions can respond to the demands of a high theme, and that his treatment of its episodes is noble enough to kindle critical admiration, while poignant enough

to probe the heart. Some passages were given in the notice of 'King Arthur' in our columns on Monday which vindicated the allegation that there was poetry in the play. It is not difficult to show"—and the writer proved as good as his word —"by further excerpts that the poetical quality is rarely absent when the episode warrants its presence."

Another critic of long experience who was present at the Lyceum on Saturday, 12th January, enjoined his readers to put "aside their Tennyson and view the play as it is presented. They should judge it on its own merits, not by comparison. Viewed from this standpoint, it is to be praised because it brings within our ken characters which are true to life, characters which, despite their halo of romance, come near to ourselves. The play is well constructed. Its story progresses; its action interests, its language is always to the purpose, and often poetic; the ending of each act is dramatic. It is certainly a workmanlike play, showing the hand of the craftsman. But all this would be as nothing if it did not come home to us. This is just where 'King Arthur' is at its best. It possesses two episodes, two phases of love, which must appeal to the audience. In their treatment the dramatist finds his greatest measure of success, for they are both true, and their truth gives his play the throb of life". But we are now more concerned with the player than the play, and, although Irving's work in it did not tax his powers, it was invaluable. It is not until the fall of Lancelot, that the King rises to grandeur. Until that point, Arthur is not very greatly in evidence in Mr. Carr's play. In the prologue, he is a romantic figure, as Irving acted it, singularly impressive in the reverence with which he takes upon himself the duty of bearing the magic sword and wearing its scabbard. In the first act, there was little for Irving to do beyond showing, and that by minute touches of art, the King's love for his Queen, and his deep friendship for Lancelot. King Arthur does not appear in the second act; he does not really come into prominence until late in the play. In the third act, Arthur makes the discovery which forms the tragedy of the play.

This old situation, of the trusting husband, the false friend, and the faithless wife, was treated with great dignity by the dramatist, and it was acted by Irving with a pathos that was wonderful. "The scene," said the present writer at the time, "is not one of maudlin sentiment; but it might easily be let down by the actor. Mr. Irving sustains it with a marvellous power and a dignity of mien which no one else on the English stage possesses. You feel that his grief is too great for tears, but you can hear the sob in his voice as he says to Morgan le Fay, in reference to Mordred's impeachment of the Queen, 'Tell him he lies'. But the softness in his voice dies away, the words which follow come slowly and harshly as the ground slides from his feet and he beholds the woman he has loved and trusted fall confessed in her dishonour. The sublimity of this scene, ending with the King's significant, 'I want no scabbard now'—for his scabbard, the Queen, is no more to him—will long be remembered as one of the finest moments in Mr. Irving's artistic career. . . . Mr. Irving's King Arthur is both idyllic and human. His romantic and mysterious manner makes him a fitting figure for the scene at the magic mere. An ordinary actor would be out of place here, because he would be, for all his surroundings, distinctly of to-day. Mr. Irving is dreamy and sombre, but he makes you feel that out of the land of shadows, something real, something nearer to ourselves, will presently arise. Anything more intensely human the stage can hardly have known. You can judge his acting either in the prologue or in this later scene. Place them, though, side by side, as companion pictures, or, to be correct, as contrasting pictures—the one of romance, above and beyond us; the other of ourselves, a human heart laid bare and broken —a combination of poetry and humanity, and there you have the reason of Mr. Irving's superb success on the stage."

"King Arthur" was admirably acted by each member of the cast. Mr. Forbes Robertson—whose Duke of Buckingham in "Henry VIII." was a most touching performance—was an ideal Lancelot. He rendered to perfection the good man, who, impelled by Fate to do a wrong, is haunted by

conscience and stricken with shame. The character, admirably conceived by the dramatist, was interpreted with delightful fidelity by the actor. The character of the Queen, although somewhat overshadowed by Arthur and Lancelot, was one of the most charming of Miss Ellen Terry's impersonations at the Lyceum. She invested it with perfect grace and womanliness. The Elaine of Miss Lena Ashwell was a refined, tender, pathetic performance, and the other characters were in safe keeping. The scenery and costumes were designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones; music was specially written by Sir Arthur Sullivan. In short, nothing was neglected which could help the perfect presentation of the poetic drama, of which ninety-one consecutive representations were given.

A fortnight after the production of "King Arthur," Irving presided over the annual meeting of the Actors' Benevolent Fund, and, seeing an item in the accounts—"Collected at St. Mary-at-Hill Church, £2 7s. 4d."—he was moved to remark that "theatrical charities are not, as a rule, favoured with crumbs from the collection plate, though I dare say that it has often received the actor's humble contribution". On the afternoon of Friday, 1st February, he delivered an address before the Royal Institution of Great Britain, of which he was a member from 1895 until his death. Rarely, if ever, had the theatre of the Institution presented so lively an appearance as on that occasion. Sir James Crichton-Browne, the treasurer and vice-president, who took the chair, stated that, with one possible exception, a larger audience had never assembled in the building in Albemarle-street. The lecturer was in excellent voice, and every point in his address had its intended effect. He took "Acting: an Art" as his theme, and he struck the key-note of his claim in his opening sentences. "My immediate purpose," he began, "is not so much to deal with the existing classification of the Fine Arts as to add to the recognised number one other, the Art of Acting—that art which Voltaire spoke of as 'the most beautiful, the most difficult, the most rare!' The claim that I make is purely a technical one, for the thing itself has long ago been done. The

great bulk of thinking—and unthinking—people accept Acting as one of the Arts; it is merely for a formal and official recognition of the fact that I ask. The people, who are the students of life, have learned their lesson, and perhaps the professors should now learn it also. In the face of the widespread influence of the stage of to-day and its place in the thoughts and hearts of the people, it would seem about as necessary to vindicate acting as an art as it would be to justify the existence of the air we breathe or the sunshine which makes life joyous; but when we find that the records are deficient, we should, I think, endeavour to have them completed. . . . Official recognition of anything worthy is a good, or at least a useful thing. It is a part, and an important part, of the economy of the State; if it is not, of what use are titles and distinctions, names, ribbons, badges, offices, in fact the titular and sumptuary ways of distinction? Systems and courts, titles and offices, have all their part in a complex and organised civilisation, and no man and no calling is particularly pleased at being compelled to remain outside a closed door."

He cited many eminent names in support of his contention that acting is an art, but his peroration was his most convincing plea: "Truly the actor's work embraces all the arts. He must first have the gift or faculty of acting—a power which is as much a gift as power to paint or to mould—and whose order or regulated expression is the function of art. His sympathy must then realise to himself the image in the poet's mind, and by the exercise of his art use his natural powers to the best advantage. His form and emotions are, in common with the sculptor's work, graceful and purposeful; his appearance and expression, heightened by costume and pictorial preparation, are in common with the work of the painter, and wrought in a certain degree by the same means and to the same ends: his speaking is in common with the efforts of the musician—to arouse the intelligence by the vibrations and modulations of organized sound. Was it by chance, or inspiration, or out of the experience amongst arts that the poet Campbell wrote:—

How ill can Poetry express
Full many a tone of thought sublime;
And Painting, mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance of time;

But by the mighty Actor wrought
Illusion's perfect triumphs come;
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And Sculpture to be dumb.

Acting may be evanescent, it may work in the media of common nature, it may be mimetic like the other arts, it may not create, any more than does the astronomer or the naturalist, but it can live, and can add to the sum of human knowledge, in the ever-varying study of man's nature by man, and its work can, like the six out of the seven wonders of the world, exist as a great memory."

Before Irving's claim for official recognition of the stage was formally recognised, as it was within four months of his address at the Royal Institution, he changed the programme at the Lyceum. A sharp attack of influenza made it necessary for him to remain away from the theatre for a few nights in March, when his part was taken by an old and reliable member of the company, Mr. Frank Tyars. After recuperating at Bournemouth, he re-appeared as King Arthur. On the 4th May, he replaced Mr. Carr's drama with three one-act plays, of different styles and interests. The opening piece was Mr. Pinero's comedietta, "Bygones," which, it will be remembered, was originally produced by Irving at the Lyceum on 18th September, 1880. "A Story of Waterloo" had already been seen at Bristol in the previous September, and at a matinée at the Garrick Theatre in December, but it was practically new to London playgoers. "A Chapter from Don Quixote" was, however, entirely new to the public. The most remarkable thing, to my mind, about Irving's rendering of the Waterloo veteran on this first night in London was the vast improvement upon his impersonation, fine as that was, at Bristol. His capacity for adding finishing touches to his acting—a capacity which he possessed in an extraordinary degree—was very conspicuous on this occasion. Either from the absence of

great nervousness, or as a result of the development which invariably marked his acting, he then made the old corporal much more pathetic than he did on the occasion of his first performance. At Bristol, he was realistic and impressive—painfully impressive. In London, there was the same fidelity in the drawing of the character, but it was so finished that it had an additional touch of pathos. This old soldier, feeble in mind and in body, with no recollection but that of the battle in which

A STORY OF WATERLOO.

Originally produced at the Prince's Theatre, Bristol, 21st September, 1894; first acted in London at a matinée at the Garrick Theatre, 17th December, 1894; first acted at the Lyceum, 4th May, 1895, the cast being the same on each occasion.

Corporal Gregory Brewster -	Mr. Henry Irving.
Sergeant Archie McDonald -	Mr. Fuller Mellish.
Colonel James Midwinter - -	Mr. Haviland.
Norah Brewster - - -	Miss Annie Hughes.

A CHAPTER FROM THE LIFE OF DON QUIXOTE.

First acted at the Lyceum, 4th May, 1895.

Master Quixada - -	Mr. Irving.
Sancho Panza - - -	Mr. Johnson.
Father Perez - - -	Mr. Haviland.
Pedro - - - -	Mr. Archer.
A Peasant - - -	Mr. Reynolds.
Antonio - - - -	Miss de Silva.
Muleteers - - -	Messrs. Belmore and Rivington.
Maria - - - -	Miss Milton.
Dulcinea - - - -	Mrs. Lacy.
An Old Woman - -	Mr. Innes.
Girls - - - -	Misses Foster, K. Harwood and Ailsa Craig.

he had done a brave deed, was as perfect an impersonation of its kind as the stage can show. In the matter of appearance alone, it was a triumph. Irving's natural height lost itself in the thin, shrunken body. His very eyes seemed film-covered and lacking in light, while the bones were almost seen under the shrunken skin of the hands and in the stiffened wrists. It was evident from the moment that Gregory Brewster tottered on the stage that he was not long for this world. His querulous cry for his "rations," his occasional quarrelsomeness, were

forgiven, because of the feebleness of the old guardsman upon whom rests the shadow of death. In nothing was Irving's art more excellently exemplified than in the actual death of the Waterloo veteran. It came quickly, in a burst of virility caused by the recollection of the heroic action of younger days. It was short, and sharp, and over before the audience could reflect. An elaborate, long-drawn out death scene, would have proved too great a tension, and Irving wisely made the end as swift as it was true Out of slender material, he created in Corporal Gregory Brewster a perfect picture of the pathos of old age. It was not a happy picture. It was not intended to be one. But it was a very fine and remarkable embodiment of character. It was absorbing in its interest. It fascinated the spectators during every moment that the actor was on the stage.

The sketch of "Don Quixote" was the condensation of a five-act play, by W. G. Wills, which had been for many years in the possession of Irving, who felt that the subject was hardly strong enough for an evening's entertainment. Moreover, as there is no love interest in the story, and, more important still, as there could not be a suitable part for Miss Ellen Terry in any dramatisation, "Don Quixote" was impossible as an attraction of paramount importance. In the Lyceum play, the first scene, a room in Quixote's house, showed Master Quixote poring over books of chivalry, dreaming deeds of daring, and inditing a love-letter to the lady of his imagination. A pretty touch was the affection of Quixada for his niece, and the scene closed with the buckling on by Sancho Panzo of his master's old armour. The second scene, the moonlit courtyard of the inn, mistaken by Quixote for the chapel of the castle, introduced the demented gentleman on his shabby steed, Rosinante. Don Quixote no longer tilted at windmills, but had a bout with a pump. He was jeered at by muleteers, and a coarse wench was put forward as the lady of his love. His niece and the good priest, who had entered into an innocent conspiracy, led him off, and so ended this simple "chapter". The material was very slender, but the actor made the figure of Don Quixote step

from the pages of Cervantes, and, in the course of a few minutes, live upon the stage. The very figure, tall and spare, with frail, pointed beard, arched eyebrows, and dreamy, absent look, combined in making a lasting portrait. But he succeeded in depicting Don Quixote in more than appearance. He presented the chivalry of the character, with all its gentle feeling, all its honourable purpose. One laughed not at, but with him, realising that, for all the ludricrous things that he did, the quaint exterior but thinly veiled a tender heart and the soul of honour. In short, he presented a perfect picture of the demented gentleman, meek, chivalrous, courteous to women, and, despite his ambition for fighting and his doing of foolish things, one of much pathos. It was a vivid contrast to Gregory Brewster.

One of the most modern dramatic critics, Mr. A. B. Walkley, who was then taking a prominent position as an authority on theatrical affairs, wrote a characteristic impression of Irving as Corporal Brewster and Don Quixote:—

"Are you in the playhouse, what Sam Weller called Job Trotter, a 'waterworks'? Do you weep there, as the walrus wept on the seashore, 'like anything'? I confess I readily play cry-baby in the theatre—am *artidakrus*, as the Greeks put it, in my quality of playgoer. As it happens, however, Mr. Irving has not hitherto, been one of the players to whom my tears have almost readily responded. As a rule he interests, stimulates, impresses me, calls up all sorts of ideas and feelings in me, in short, except the one feeling known to ladies as 'wanting a good cry.' I was quite surprised, therefore, to find myself fairly blubbering at the Lyceum the other night. It was over 'A Story of Waterloo,' a simple story enough and an unpretentious—Dr. Conan Doyle is not a writer who can ever be accused of supersubtlety—and all the more moving from its simplicity. It presents one of those *mortalia*, those signs of mortality in human affairs, which, as Virgil said, *mentem tangunt*, do come home to the mind and touch it. The sight of life flickering out from sheer old age is not poignantly, but gentle, and almost consolingly sad; there is nothing of the bitterness of death in it, but merely a sinking into placid sleep. The sadness is found rather in the thought that 'to this complexion must thou come,' in the pity for decay and for a man once strong, once filled with the May of youth and the bloom of lustihood, brought to second childhood. There is young Corporal Gregory Brewster of the Third Guards, on the mantelpiece, erect in his stiff stock and huge bearskin. There is old Gregory in the arm-chair, toothless, with squeaking voice, 'supping' his tea with loud gurgles like a greedy child, and crying like a baby over his broken pipe. It is an obvious elementary contrast, no doubt, and a commonplace of our daily life, but it is just there that I find the merit of the Lyceum performance, in its presentation of a

theme that is commonplace in a way that is not. Done crudely, cheaply, it would have been worse than nothing—a chromolithographic inanity from the top of a grocer's almanac. Done as it is by Mr. Irving, with distinction, tact, delicacy, measure, it becomes a thing really delightful. Studies of senility we have had from Mr. Irving before—in 'Lear,' for instance, and in 'Louis XI.'—but never so complete a study as this, I think. They were 'in the grand manner,' this is in the minute; it is a piece of cherry-stone carving. The delight of the old man over his new pipe; the chuckling superiority with which he confounds all the modern world by a mere reference to the 'Dook'—'that wouldn't 'a done for the Dook; the Dook would 'ave 'ad summat to say to that'—his constant repetition of his one anecdote—'The riggiment's proud o' ye,' says the Regent; 'and I'm proud of the riggiment,' says I, 'and a damned good answer, too, says the Regent, and bursts out a laffin'"—his excitement when the military band passes his window, his sudden spring to the salute when the colonel calls, and all the time the life slowly ebbing out of him. It is a finished picture, and, to my mind, one of the most actual, 'observed' things Mr. Irving has ever done.

A very different effort is his Knight of the Woeful Countenance. For years past Mr. Irving has been entreated on all hands to play Don Quixote. He was so obviously the figure for the part; so obviously the man to give us that blend of dignity and fantasy of which the hero of Cervantes is the great exponent in world-literature. Opinions are curiously at variance as to the result. Some people, it seems, think he 'guys' the character, errs by excess of farce; and it may be that—at any rate on the first night, when he felt that the piece, tending to fall flat, must be 'lifted' at all costs—he did somewhat over emphasise the drollery of the part, at the expense of its loftiness, of its romance. Still, to my eye at least, the loftiness, the romance, were there. When the knight fell on his knees in silent prayer beiore his armour, I 'forgot to remember' that the armour was absurdly ill-fitting, or that it was lying in the horse-trough. I only saw a noble spirit, however distraught, filled with the solemnity of its mission. When he entreated the jeering village wenches to be more modest in their demeanour, I ceased to see the wenches, I only saw the chivalrous hidalgo. What does this mean? Why, of course, that I saw things, for the moment, with the eye of Don Quixote, not with that of Sancho Panza—which is just the effect one gets out of Cervantes at his best. The complaint raised in some quarters that incidents are introduced for which Cervantes gives no warrant strikes me as the very superfluity of captiousness. To be sure, it is not recorded in the book that Don Quixote used to turn over the pages of 'Amadis de Gaul' with his sword, or that he tried to carry a ten-foot lance erect through a seven-foot doorway. But that is a mere accident; these details are in the very spirit of incidents which are recorded in the book, and so find ample justification. As to the catchword, 'Heaven knows my meaning; I say no more'—why not? On the whole, Mr. Irving's Don Quixote is as good a thing as we had a right to expect. The real misfortune is that the excerpts made from the book for stage purposes were not chosen more adroitly, with a truer feeling for the poetry and philosophy of the great comic epic. The late Mr. W. G. Wills was not the man for so difficult and delicate a task as that."

It was while Irving was playing "Don Quixote" that the announcement was made of his knighthood. There were significant demonstrations at the Lyceum on the night of 24th May, and the actor was compelled to bow his acknowledgment of the cheer upon cheer which greeted him for several minutes. One or two sentences in "Don Quixote" were peculiarly applicable to the situation and provoked great enthusiasm. "Knighthood," says Quixote, "sits like a halo round my head." "But, master, you have never been knighted," says the housekeeper. Then, after the attack on the pump, there was the dubbing of Quixote as the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance. All these points were taken in good part and caused much laughter and applause. On the fall of the curtain, there were such incessant demands for a speech that the actor was obliged to comply with them, though briefly, in acknowledgment of "the appreciation shown of the honour conferred, through him, upon the calling to which he had devoted his life"—for that was the light in which he invariably viewed the matter. No other announcement in the list of Queen Victoria's birthday honours for that day appealed to the public so forcibly as this, and the manner in which the distinction was welcomed by the press and all classes of people proved that Lord Rosebery had done one of the most popular and graceful acts of his administration. Mr. Gladstone spoke of the knighthood as "a more than deserved honour" and as having given him "the liveliest satisfaction". During Gladstone's administration —in 1883—a knighthood had been offered to Irving. The actor and the statesman were friends for over twenty years. When Gladstone visited the Lyceum, he witnessed the play from a sort of box fitted up at the wings, as he suffered from a slight deafness.

Telegrams and letters of congratulation poured in from all quarters, and the principal newspapers of the kingdom had leading articles on the event. The first telegrams from abroad received by the actor were from Sarah Bernhardt, Madame Calvé, M. Mounet-Sully, M. Coquelin, and M. Jules Claretie. M. Mounet-Sully was not content with sending a message.

"For Mr. Irving," he said to a representative of *Gil Blas*, "I have always had a great affection. He is an incomparable actor, a marvellous stage-manager, a man of refined literary taste. He is one of the greatest artists England has possessed, and I rejoice in the distinction which has just been conferred upon him." From the Comédie Française came an immediate and most cordial congratulation. "The committee and the sociétaires," it said, "desire to send you their cordial good wishes, and to signify the pleasure they feel at the high distinction of which you have lately been made the recipient. We are all delighted to see a great country pay homage to a great artist, and we applaud with all our hearts the fitting and signal recompense paid to an actor who has done such powerful service and profound honour to our calling and our art. Accept then, dear Sir Henry Irving, the expression of our deep sympathy as artists, and the sincere devotion which we feel towards you." None of the names connected with the Maison de Molière was absent from the address. The spirit which prompted this address also found expression in the Paris press generally. "It has been reserved for Mr. Irving," said the *Gaulois*, "to break down in England the old prejudice as to actors. His performances are events in the history of the London stage. In his hands the Lyceum has become a sort of national theatre. The English have in it their Maison de Shakespeare, as we have in the theatre of the Rue Richelieu our Maison de Molière. Indeed, his Shakespearean revivals are so highly esteemed, that when it was intended to play 'Hamlet' at the Théâtre Français, M. Jules Claretie paid a special visit to London for the purpose of studying the mise-en-scène of the piece at the Lyceum. Artist, scholar, and man of the world, Henry Irving combines these qualities in a very particular degree; and his knighthood has been hailed with delight by the whole of artistic and literary London." "More than that of any other man," said the *Débats*, "has his influence contributed to the present high repute of the British stage." "The Queen," the *Figaro* pointed out, "has more than rewarded the exceptional merit of a great artist. She officially puts aside the

prejudice which raised a barrier between the actor and his fellow citizens. For some time past this barrier has been assailed by public opinion, and there was not very much of it left. From and after to-day it disappears, and the date of the 25th May last marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the actor in England."

The popularity of the actor in the United States received a fresh and striking illustration. Scarcely a paper in the country failed to contain a congratulatory article on his knighthood. An extract from one of the most representative journals there may be taken as a sample of all the comments made on the subject. "If there be anything exceptionally to honour in a title, it is furnished by those men who really add to a title rather than by those men in whom a title is supposed to supplement that which originally made them eminent. Henry Irving had already reached a place in public esteem to which knighthood could add nothing of intrinsic honour. In fact, Henry Irving will give a new distinction to the decoration, because the decoration can really give no addition of nobility to him. There have been great Englishmen who have put aside the tender of knighthood. They have been content to rest with the honours of their accomplishment. No doubt, Henry Irving, in his heart, has scant respect for this ceremonial mark of favour. But he has for years worked more consistently to dignify and distinguish his calling than he has for personal or individual satisfaction. The theatre has been his temple. He is the first man immediately of the theatre in Great Britain to receive the honour of knighthood. He has broken down the traditions that for centuries placed actors outside the social pale, and such has been his work that now royalty itself destroys ancient customs and creates a precedent in his favour, and, through him, in favour of the stage. All honour, therefore, to Sir Henry Irving."

Irving received the accolade at Windsor Castle on 18th July. His own account of the ceremony is interesting, and not without humour. "I went to Windsor," he said, "with twelve others. The room in which the Queen received us

was a small one, and I had to walk but a few steps forward and kneel. The Queen then extended her hand, which I kissed, and her Majesty touched me on each shoulder with the sword, and said, 'Rise, Sir Henry,' and I rose. Then, departing from her usual custom, for that is supposed to end the ceremony, she added, 'It gives me very great pleasure, sir'. I bowed, and then withdrew from the room with my face towards her Majesty. Walking backward is unusual for me, and I felt constantly as if I should bump into some one; but I managed it all right." "With regard to the knighthood," he said on another occasion, "do not think that it was not a momentous thing to me. The man could not well, in waiting for that accolade, separate himself from the art which was about to be honoured, and the knowledge that I was to receive it at the hands of the noblest, greatest, and most broad-minded woman in England, as well as Queen and Empress of my country, of our vast empire, had, let me solemnly assure you, much to do in impressing me deeply." "And now you are Sir Henry Irving," remarked his interrogator. "It is a recognition of the stage," he modestly replied, "that is all. We are now as other citizens. The Queen was very kind."

On the 19th of July, the day after he had been formally knighted, he was presented, on the stage of the Lyceum Theatre, with an address signed by more than four thousand of his brother and sister artists. It was a memorable scene, no player being absent who could by any means be present, and the entire house being occupied by such a gathering of members of the theatrical profession as had rarely assembled. The address, written by Mr. Pinero, was enclosed in a gold and silver casket made from a design by Mr. Forbes Robertson. Mr. (now Sir Squire) Bancroft had the honour of taking the chair. He said:—

"I am deeply honoured, and feel the honour deeply, in being chosen to present on such an occasion this gift to our dear friend Henry Irving, for whom an admiration nearly thirty years old, and a friendship of the same age, which ripened quickly to affection, make the privilege both precious and delightful to me. Sir, in commemoration of the unique event which brings us together, we offer for your acceptance a personal roll-call of the

British stage, which contains, among some thousands of autographs, the names of the survivors who have done honour to our calling in the past, the names of those who are its most distinguished ornaments now, and the names of those whose destinies lie in the future—who are, in fact, the heirs and guardians of the present and the past. Without going further down the long list, I would like to tell you that you will read the names of Lady Martin, who, as Helen Faucit, won her splendid reputation in the great classic drama as a youthful heroine with Macready; of the incomparable and ever-young Mrs. Keeley; and of that brilliant actress Lady Gregory, who, as Mrs. Stirling, appeared last upon the stage with you; while it will interest you to see among the names of veterans the signature of, I believe, the oldest actor in the world—Mr. James Doel, whom I had the pleasure to know years ago in Plymouth. We also present to you an address which has been written by one well remembered as an actor on these boards before he grew to be a leading dramatist of the time, and the casket which contains our offering has been designed on purpose by an actor who has often served as one of your chief lieutenants, and who will honourably preserve your own traditions here while you are absent in other lands. The most august and exalted in the realm have condescended often to courtly words and gracious deeds which will always be cherished by those of us who have received them in grateful and dutiful remembrance; but you, Sir Henry Irving, will ever be remembered as the first actor to win for the stage the dignity and the honour of State recognition. All who are here, and those we represent—than whom none know you better, or love you more—join with me in heartfelt wishes that the autumn of your life may be long and bright, opening to a winter of peace and happiness. When those days come, may you rejoice in the recollection that you made your companions proud of you, prouder of their calling, and each man in our ranks prouder still to think and feel that, like yourself, he is an actor."

The address was as follows:—

"We, actors and actresses, your associates in the dramatic profession in Great Britian and Ireland—the few that have fallen out of its ranks joining in this address with those who are active—desire to offer you our congratulations upon the honour of knighthood which has been conferred on you by her Majesty the Queen. This honour is at once a formal recognition of your supreme talent as an actor, a lofty tribute to your long, arduous, and distinguished labours as the manager of the Lyceum Theatre, and an authoritative sign of appreciation of the attitude adopted by you in relation to the theatre at large. But to all who are intimately connected with the stage the event has a deeper significance, for we perceive in the signal mark of favour earned by you a token that the barrier which had hitherto enclosed the stage and its followers is yielding to the forces of liberality and open-mindedness. Therefore we take this to be a fitting occasion to place upon record our grateful acknowledgment of your unvarying adherence and loyalty to those who are in the widest sense, as well as to those who are in the closest sense, your comrades. We remember that, while your performances upon the stage have greatly enlarged the popularity and influence of the drama, your utterances outside the theatre have always tended to claim

for our calling generally a considerable place in the estimation of thinking people; that in the height of your own frequent triumphs your first word has been for your fellow-workers; that you have never wearied in demanding for the earnest actor, however modest his standing, the recognition due to one who pursues an art which is as individual and complete as it is beautiful and alluring. It is certain that to-day every member of our craft is benefited and advanced by the distinction you have so justly gained; and we believe that the debt of gratitude due to you will be acknowledged as fully by posterity as it is by ourselves, your contemporaries. For the history of the theatre will enduringly chronicle your achievements, and tradition will fondly render an account of your personal qualities; and so, from generation to generation, the English actor will be reminded that his position in the public regard is founded in no small degree upon the pre-eminence of your career, and upon the nobility, dignity, and sweetness of your private character."

Loud and prolonged cheers prevented the actor from replying for some minutes. When at length silence was restored, he spoke as follows :—

"My brother and sister actors, formal speech cannot adequately convey to you the pride and pleasure awakened in me by your most cordial and loving words, and so I can but trust that you will intuitively understand the depth of my gratitude. There can be no greater honour to any man than the appreciation of his efforts by his comrades and fellow workers, who are, as against all others, most fully qualified to understand his difficulties and to sympathise with his hopes and aims. In common with you all, I rejoice at the honour conferred upon our art, and hold as another bond our gratitude to our most gracious Queen, who has conferred the distinction. That the actors whose memories extend over nearly a century, and those whose endeavours will, I trust, stretch into an equal future, should have thus united in a purpose of approval of an honour to our calling, is in itself a fragment of the history of our time of which I must rejoice to have a share. Still more must I be glad that your approval has endorsed the generous words of your address. I can only say this—that I have been always proud to be an actor; but I have never been so proud as now, for to-day there is a bond between us which I feel sure will never slacken. This beautiful casket, and its more precious contents, will ever be to me a shrine of loving memories and a monument of our unity. The honour of its possession is above all worth. In the olden times our Britons showed their appreciation of a comrade by lifting him upon their shields, and I cannot but feel, and feel it with an unspeakable pride, that you, my brothers in our art, have lifted me on your shields. There is no more honour to come into the life of a man so raised. It puts upon him a new and grave responsibility, which I must accept with hope and fear—a pledge to work with more strenuous endeavour for the well-being of our calling and for the honour of our art."

This remarkable scene had hardly finished, before Irving,

with that kindly feeling which was inherent in him, wrote the following letter to Mr. Pinero :—

"Lyceum Theatre.

"My dear Pinero,

"I must write to thank you for the most beautiful address to-day—which touched me to the heart.

"Thanks and thanks again old friend—I shall never forget it.

"Sincerely ever,

"Henry Irving."

"19*th July*, 1895.

During the last two months of this memorable season, the various plays of the Lyceum répertoire which were to be given in America in the autumn, were produced with the customary completeness. In addition to "King Arthur," the following pieces were revived : "The Merchant of Venice," "Faust," "Louis XI.," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Becket," "Charles the First," "The Lyons Mail," "The Corsican Brothers," and "Macbeth". This list, together with "A Story of Waterloo" and "Don Quixote," and "Nance Oldfield" and "Journeys End in Lovers Meeting," in both of which Miss Terry appeared, made up a formidable bill of fare for American playgoers. The last-named piece was put into the Lyceum programme in July and given on three occasions : it was produced for the first time, at Daly's Theatre, on the afternoon of 5th June, 1894. In a review of the season at the Lyceum, a contemporary criticism touched upon the great versatility of the actor and the marvellous energy of the manager : "In looking back over the last few weeks we find it difficult to say which one is tempted to admire the more, the genius of the actor or the marvellous energy of the manager. To direct and superintend the rehearsals of such heavy productions as 'Faust,' 'The Merchant of Venice,' and 'King Arthur,' of which every detail, down to the most minute, is carefully and attentively studied, constitutes a task that, it might be supposed, would

more than tax the strength of any one man. But as if all this were the merest child's play, Sir Henry Irving caps the feat by appearing nightly in a more or less onerous part. Work would indeed seem to be a vital necessity to one who throughout his long career has never spared himself in the public service. To attempt in the narrow limits at our disposal to give anything more than a simple catalogue of the month's labours at the Lyceum would be absurd, inasmuch as each performance, by virtue of its excellence, merits a long article in itself. But a word of praise must at least be spared for the supreme art of an actor who can pass apparently without effort from the simple and dignified pathos of a Charles the First to the fretful senility of a Corporal Brewster ; who can depict with equal effect the crafty, astute Louis and the noble, great-hearted Arthur ; whose imagination is able to claim as its own the fears and hopes, the hatred and the love, of a Shylock, or to revel in the saturnine humour of a Mephistopheles. A record so long and so brilliant it is given to few men to accomplish, and one cannot but recognise that by Sir Henry Irving's absence, temporary though it be, London playgoers sustain a loss for which nothing can well compensate them."

There was but one occasion for regret in regard to this series of magnificent revivals, and that was to be found in the omission of "Hamlet". Apart, however, from the tremendous work involved in the preparation of the other plays, Irving felt that the time had passed when he could do justice to himself in an impersonation about which he always felt a keen personal pride, and, although he was frequently implored to change his mind, nothing would induce him to again appear in this character. He would not risk impairing, in the slightest degree, the memory of this beautiful interpretation. His mind was too much occupied with other things for the repose which is necessary to the acting of such a character. An evidence of his incessant thought and work was found in the revival of "Macbeth," which occurred in the last week, when he made an important innovation which escaped general notice. The ghost of Banquo no longer appeared. In place of the appari-

tion, there was simply a seat with a bluish light upon it—a far better arrangement, since it gives the actor of Macbeth "the opportunity of making the presence of the shadow apparent by force of feeling". With a visible ghost, the actor can only attidunise; without it, he can "create, vivify, and appal".

Irving's nineteenth season of his own management at the Lyceum concluded on the night of 27th July, the programme consisting of "Nance Oldfield," "A Story of Waterloo," and the church scene from "Much Ado About Nothing". On the fall of the curtain, the usual enthusiasm of such occasions was intensified by the consciousness that a long interval would elapse ere the company would be seen again in London. The manager, in the course of his farewell words, announced that on their return he would produce "Coriolanus," a drama adapted from the German by Mr. W. L. Courtney, an English version of "Madame Sans-Gêne," and a new play by Mr. Pinero. After the performance, the stage was crowded with a great gathering of personal friends—a pleasant custom on first and last nights which Irving had inaugurated at the Lyceum—and a gratifying ceremony took place. The Lord Mayor of Dublin formally presented Sir Henry Irving with the address in his praise to which reference has already been made. The address, it will be remembered, was drawn up by Professor Edward Dowden in the name of the citizens of Dublin. It was signed by, among others, Lord Wolseley, Lord Ashbourne, Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, Lord Ardilaun, and, as he then was, Mr. John Morley. It was framed in very old Irish oak such as was used in the building of Trinity College.

The receipts for the 173 performances of this season were £50,504 4s. 1d., an average of £291 18s. 7d. a night. Splendid as was this result, it was not sufficient to cover the enormous expenses, which amounted to £50,652 9s. 1d. The actor-manager spent the first part of his brief respite from work with his friend Toole at Margate. Accompanied by Miss Terry, her daughter, and some other friends, he sailed from Southampton on 31st August.

CHAPTER XIV.

September, 1895—August, 1896.

Irving's fifth American tour — His reference to Queen Victoria — A triumphal progress—Canada and Boston—Glowing praise—Irving's astounding vitality—New York endorses his Macbeth—"King Arthur" warmly received—"The most potential and the most distinguished actor of this age"—"A Christmas Story"—Hospitality in New York—Irving's speech at the Lotos Club—Bronson Howard's compliment—Philadelphia's enthusiastic greeting—Irving's first visit to the South—Its unbounded success—St. Louis and Cincinnati—Eulogy in Chicago—"Godefroi and Yolande" — Death of Henry Howe—"Gentle and sweet courtesies" — Irving's return to England "a distinct loss to the American stage"—Five weeks in the provinces—Some interesting statistics.

Irving arrived in New York at the end of the first week in September. After a brief stay at the Plaza Hotel, he went on to the Adirondacks. He was, as a matter of course, plied with questions, in regard to his title, as soon as he arrived in New York harbour. To one reporter he remarked: "Just say that in the profession I am still plain Henry Irving, and that name alone will go on the bills. I believe that actors should stand or fall on their merits, and not upon any title that they may have acquired. Not that I do not appreciate the honour conferred upon me, for I do so in the greatest degree. The Queen is a noble sovereign, and one that I revere for her nobility of heart and broad and kindly nature." He kept to this decision not to use his title on the bills, and, although it would have been, in many cases, an advertisement, he never permitted himself to be announced on the programme as "Sir Henry". The tour upon which he was now starting was his fifth campaign in America. It began in Canada, on 16th September, embraced the great cities of the east and west of the United States, and took him, for the first time, "down South," to Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans.

The tour began in Montreal with "Faust". The sale of seats in advance had never been equalled in the Academy of Music, and the good feeling of the public was echoed in the columns of the press. "Hamlet's instructions that the 'players be well bestowed,'" observed the *Gazette*, "never had the ring of true heartiness that marks the reception always tendered to Sir Henry Irving and his most admirable company when Montreal is honoured with a visit. And on this particular occasion Montreal has been specially fortunate, for his season is opened here just as he is fresh honoured from the gracious hands of his Sovereign. It is not our province to question whether the well-merited knighthood will improve the consummate art that we all learned to love and admire in plain Henry Irving: there is one thing very certain, and that is that new honours, at least in his case, have not detracted from the workings of genius in the man we have all been accustomed to look up to as the most perfect exponent of the great drama, both from histrionic and educational points of view. The Academy of Music last night held an audience such as is seen there only on rare occasions. It was a typical opening night—one of those evenings which men and women who patronise the theatre love to remember in after years, and tell their friends a decade or two from now what a great night it was. When Sir Henry appeared on the stage, there was a tremendous volume of sound, and it swept up through the house till it fairly shook the proscenium arch. It was a grand welcome back to a great artist, and certainly could not have been more enthusiastic or heartfelt." The same paper, speaking of "The Merchant of Venice," said: "This comedy of three hundred years ago, with its romantic story of the old world, held the audience entranced from the rise of the curtain to its last fall". During the week in Montreal, the first performance of "King Arthur" out of London took place. "It is essentially a Terry play," said the *Daily Star*. "Arthur, the part played by Sir Henry, shows a noble figure, an ideal king, but is more a part of repose than of action. Herein he shows the wisdom of the manager, the real love of the actor

for his art. He does not sacrifice the play to his own vanity." Another novelty to Montreal, "A Story of Waterloo," won increased admiration for the actor.

"Faust" was selected in Toronto, as in Montreal, for the beginning of the week's engagement. "We have had 'Faust' sung to us and 'Faust' played to us," said the *News*, "but never have we had Goethe's immortal work presented as it was at the Grand Opera House last night." Despite his comparatively limited opportunities in "King Arthur," Irving created a profound impression in the latter part of the play. "Until the third act," said the *Daily Mail*, "the King is more an observer than an actor in the progress of the tragedy, and Sir Henry Irving appropriately practises self-denial. But upon the terrible revelation of the third act the King rises to grandeur in his sublime sorrow, his magnanimity, his resignation to fatality. Few among the immense audience which crowded the house last night till there was but standing room will forget his impressive, tragic portrayal at this moment. It was one of the finest efforts that either Sir Henry or Mr. Irving has given us among his representations in Toronto. The character is dignified, noble, and as such Sir Henry has photographed it on our memories." As for Irving's Corporal Brewster, it was, according to the *World*, "the greatest piece of character impersonation in the annals of the English-speaking stage".

Boston was next visited, and here, on 30th September, a season of four weeks' duration began. The prevailing sentiment in regard to this engagement was voiced by Mr. William E. Bryant, who, writing in the *Journal*, said: "The return visit of Sir Henry Irving to America is an event of great interest to the vast number of people who are interested in the drama and its exponents, especially as each succeeding visit makes another a matter of some uncertainty. In the history of the stage there does not stand, all things considered, a nobler figure than that of Sir Henry Irving. His fame has been achieved, not through adventitious circumstances, not merely by the support and encouragement of wealthy and influential

patrons of art, but by steady, persistent efforts in the right direction. Controlled and directed by an intellect of uncommon strength and brilliancy, and an unswerving purpose to secure for the stage that position in public sympathy and respect which a decent, intelligent course on the part of its best representatives deserved, Mr. Irving is entitled to the support and encouragement which has been liberally given to him; and when he received the merited recognition of his art from the Queen, he rejoiced not selfishly, in the acquirement of a title, but gratefully, with other exponents of dramatic literature throughout the world, in the breaking down of social barriers which had been set up against his art, an art which Mr. Irving has always believed was equally deserving, with any other form of art, of social and official recognition."

Nearly the whole of the répertoire was presented in Boston, a fact which caused much comment on the actor-manager's incessant energy. "His capacity for work and his love of it," remarked the *Boston Journal*, "are amazing. It is easy to understand the endeavour which is compelled by necessity, but the average man finds it difficult to comprehend this actor's untiring efforts, his constant employment, his unceasing energy. His vitality is simply astounding. He never spares himself, he never slights or slurs his work. The public that gives him the encouragement of its presence, that props his artistic effort with pecuniary reward, is never disappointed, no matter what discouraging circumstances attend his work. If he be tired or ill, his audiences never know it. His devotion to his art and his deep sense of responsibility to his public furnish examples to the younger generation of actors which, if profited by, mean much for the future welfare of the theatre. As he does not spare himself, those immediately associated with him have no cause for complaint. Indeed, the cheerfulness with which the members of his company work with him, for him, and under his intelligent direction, is one of the remarkable features of a great organisation which has never had its equal in any country."

He began his engagement in New York on 29th October

in "Macbeth," which he then produced for the first time in America. The performance aroused much interest, and the opinion of the public was reflected by the criticism in the *Tribune:* "All persons who know the contemporary stage are aware that the dramatic productions effected by Henry Irving are works of perfect art and of the noblest character. To an intellect the most lucid, aspiring, and potential that the theatre has shown in this age—or in any age—he joins a character the most admirably poised and self-contained, an imagination of prodigious celerity, ardour and scope, tremulous sensibility, pure taste, and exquisite refinement. With him is associated Ellen Terry, the one actress of the present time best qualified to match his peculiar achievements and to enhance their splendour—a woman of rare beauty, and of that mysterious charm which springs from exalted spirituality of condition and expression—that elusive genius which, while it entrances the feelings, is a baffling bewilderment to the mind. A combination so extraordinary and authoritative, reinforced with an elaborate professional equipment, and wielding with competent, experienced skill the varied and splendid forces of dramatic art, was, from the outset, predestined to victory. Permanent success happens because it must happen, and it is never dependent on chance. In the case of these great actors the sovereignty established long ago remains unbroken, and the eager emotion and long-continued plaudits that welcomed them last night only ratified a loyal regard that was gained by fascination and that lives by nature. At the height of his career and in the plenitude of his powers, Henry Irving has made a wise choice in reverting to 'Macbeth'. With, perhaps, the single exception of 'King Lear,' it is of all the characters of Shakespeare—and therefore of all the characters in dramatic literature—the most difficult of representation; and to succeed in it is to wear unquestioned the crown of histrionic supremacy. Only a great actor can play Macbeth. Not only do the situations that enliven the character make a prodigious draft upon the emotion, knowledge, skill, endurance, and physical powers of

its representatives: the character itself is so massive and so complex that only the subtlest dramatic intuition can grasp it, and only the amplest capacity and experience give it authoritative expression. Irving, who has studied it all his life, and played it often, brings to it many qualifications which are final and supreme. No actor has appeared, in our time, who was for one moment comparable with Irving in the portrayal of characters intrinsically and essentially weird. Macready might, perhaps, have vied with him in this, and also in imagination; but one attribute he abundantly possesses that Macready did not equally possess—the tender, profound sensibility which, whether it be directed toward the manifestation of afflicted goodness or the delirious agony of insurgent and consciously foredoomed evil, is the inspiration of pathos. His embodiment of Macbeth—with, perhaps, the qualification that it somewhat lacks volume and continuity of physical power—is absolutely true to nature and entirely great as poetic art."

"King Arthur" was warmly received in New York. "If any of the house," said the *World*, on the morning following the production, "were unimpressed last night by the beauty, the artistic charm, the harmony and taste which marked the latest, and perhaps most wondrous stage production that we owe to Henry Irving, let him hold his peace. He is a Goth —a cross Boetian—bereft of soul and sight." And the writer then went into an enthusiastic argument in favour of the play and the interpretation thereof. The experienced critic of the *Spirit of the Times*, Mr. Stephen Fiske, averred "that never before has a poetic play been so poetically placed upon the stage. The very atmosphere is that of the England of good King Arthur. Irving rises to the great heights of his genius as King Arthur. There are no more criticisms of his elocution, as there were in Macbeth; no more references to his mannerisms, which have now become his manner, his method, as much a part of his art as the manner or method of a Titian, a Beethoven, or a Phidias. The Guenevere of Ellen Terry is more than a companion picture: it is a companion soul."

A certain Presidential Message, which the majority of people have completely forgotten, aroused a large amount of anti-English feeling in America at the time of Irving's visit to New York in this autumn, but it did not prevent the play-goers of that city from attending, and appreciating, the performances. For the receipts in the theatre came to $125,808, or, roughly speaking, over £3000 sterling a week for eight weeks. And the artistic result was equal to the financial aspect of the case. "For intellectual men," said the *Tribune*, in reviewing the engagement, "the presence of Henry Irving upon our stage has from the first been not less a benefit than a delight. Mind answers to mind; and it is one of the signal peculiarities of this great actor that, everywhere and under all circumstances, he is the cause of incessant intellectual activity. Without tumult, and simply through his tremendous energy and unresting labour, he arouses and stimulates, in every quarter, the intellectual force of the time. Every thinker is aware of his presence and conscious of his influence. For nearly a quarter of a century his power in this respect has been advancing—the power to stimulate thought, to awaken interest, to vitalise ambition, to refresh weary minds, to diffuse alacrity of spirit, and to hallow common life with the charm of romance. The contemporary intelligence, both in England and America, has been broadened, sharpened and refined by his sumptuous ministration of the dramatic art, and the world is better because of his beneficent career. This may seem an exaggerated estimate of the influence of an actor, but it is one that will bear a rigorous examination. Irving's brilliant success in 'The Bells' was made twenty-four years ago, and from that day to this he has moved steadily upward, leaving all competitors behind, until now he is the most potential and the most distinguished actor of this age. Such a conquest is achieved only by the wise use of imperial powers, the most strenuous labour, and the most conscientious devotion to those ideas and agencies which are naturally tributary to human happiness. This is the moral of the farewell performance of this extraordinary actor."

During the New York engagement, Irving delivered, on 27th November, his address on "Macbeth," before the students of Columbia College; many distinguished visitors were present, in addition to the students and professors. On 7th December, he produced a new play entitled "A Christmas Story". This was an English version, in blank verse, by his son, Laurence—then a member of his company—of Mr. Maurice Boucher's one-act "Conte de Noël," played by the Comédie Française in 1894. The little piece, which was well received, preceded a performance of "The Bells".

The most important of the social functions which Irving attended in New York was a supper given to him by the Lotos Club, in their new premises in Fifth Avenue, on Saturday, the 16th November. Three hundred members and friends were present, and the guest of the evening was presented by the club with a silver loving-cup, urn-shaped, with designs representing the actor in some of his chief characters. Mr. J. Ringgold McCoy had composed an original poem for the occasion, which he read, and in the course of which it was said:—

> The drama in the world of art
> Her prestige never loses;
> She wields her sceptre as of old,
> Queen-regent of the Muses.
> Sir Henry Irving stands to-day,
> Their spirits hovering o'er him,
> Epitome of all the great
> Who lived and died before him.

The chair was taken by the President of the club, Mr Frank Lawrence, who paid a warm tribute to the guest of the evening, recalling the old friendship that existed between him and the Lotos Club, at whose table he made his first appearance in America, and referring to him as a later, greater Garrick, who stood, at the end of the nineteenth century, "by the common consent of all English-speaking people, in so exalted a position." "Such a greeting as yours," said Sir Henry Irving in reply, "robs one of words as one looks on your friendly faces and sees the bright sparkle of your friendly eyes. The

memories of this club are very dear to me, and the good will of its members is dearer to me still. I remember when I first set foot on American soil, in your beloved country, it added a new interest to my life. The members of the Lotos Club were the first to bid me welcome and to extend to me that strong grip of friendship and the good fellowship that has never, never relaxed. Your other home was also a very comfortable and happy home. Your president was a very honoured and esteemed friend of mine, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, and so was your vice-president, General Horace Porter. I remember how your president, in extending the cordial greeting of your club, playfully warned me that I must not mistake the enthusiasm of the members of the club for the applause of the audience at the Star Theatre on almost the following night. 'What the newspapers will say on Tuesday morning,' said he, 'alas the mind of man knoweth not.' Well, the scales turned in my favour, and the generous approbation of the New York public made it kick the beam, and has ever kept it in that position. I should be a dullard and a less grateful man than I am if I did not look back with renewed delight to the day when I first saw your shores and the time when I first saw you. I thank you, members of the Lotos Club, for the gracious and kindly way in which you have received the kindly words of your president to-night. Again I thank you with all my heart and soul. 'I count myself in nothing else so happy As in a soul remem'bring my good friends,' and it is my dearest hope that I may ever retain the esteem and friendship—and I would say it, if I might, the affection — which has found expression in a form that not only confers distinction upon myself as an actor, but on the art which you love so well."

Mr. Bronson Howard, as a representative of the American dramatists, made a pleasant little speech. He said that he had been asked, a few weeks before, to prepare a set of resolutions for the American Dramatists' Club, congratulating Sir Henry Irving on the honour recently conferred upon him by the Queen of England. "He is trying to think now," said Mr.

Howard, looking at the actor, whose thoughtful attitude opened the way for the sally, "whether, among a great number of such testimonials, he has received one from us or not. I will relieve his mind by saying he did not; we didn't send any. So far as I was concerned, I refused; but I offered to draw up a resolution congratulating the British Government on the honour conferred upon itself. That was declined, and then I began to wonder anyway whether an institution of seventy members in New York was big enough to open negotiations with a European Power. I came to the conclusion that anyway honours were easy between Sir Henry Irving and Great Britain. The great statesmen who, after Cabinet discussions, presented the name of our guest to their Sovereign, were unconscious, perhaps, of the exact reasons which led them to do so. There have been a few distinguished men in history who have risen above their own achievements and become representatives to us of great events in human society. These are to us the landmarks of human progress. Henry Irving is one of them. For the first time in history the art of the stage thoroughly respects itself, and compels the whole world to respect it. In spite of the influence society has allowed its bad members to exert against it, almost throughout history, the stage has fought its battles alone the whole time, and it has won its last campaign in Henry Irving. He stands where future historians must look back to him as an object illustrating one great phase in the social evolution of the race. All true knights in England who could understand their own rights, felt prouder of their own titles because such a man consented to become one of them, and we here in America are one with the English people when, down in the depths of our hearts, in the privacy there, we honour the man himself."

Another speaker was Mr. G. W. Smalley, then the New York correspondent of the *Times*. "I think," he remarked, "it may be said that Sir Henry Irving shines in a double light—his own and that of the men who reflect his teachings and his example. A word has been a good deal used lately—'international'. Sir Henry Irving is an international tie, the

validity of which I think no jingo would dispute. Mr. Gladstone was once asked to confer knighthood on a certain person who needn't be named. 'But it's only a knighthood; it doesn't matter,' it was said. 'Sir,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'you don't seem to remember that knighthood is the foundation of the whole scheme of honour of which the Queen is the source, and that there is no honour the conferring of which is more carefully considered than that of knighthood.'"

Another remarkable entertainment for Sir Henry Irving was provided by the New York Press Club on 11th November. In the course of the supper, Mr. Howard presented him with a pen-and-ink sketch by Mr. Tom Nast, representing Uncle Sam handing to him a loving-cup. Underneath was the inscription, "Here's to Sir Henry right royally knighted, he who has so royally nighted many of my countrymen at the Lyceum, who has proven that acting is an art, and himself its most brilliant champion".

Philadelphia was the next city visited, and here, on 22nd December, the company opened in "The Merchant of Venice". The audience on that night was one of the most remarkable ever seen in the Quaker city. "The distinguished actor and his gracious associate," said the Philadelphia *Press*, "now belong to two worlds, and the enthusiastic greeting extended to them last evening was ample evidence of the leading place they hold in the affections of the theatre-going public, in the most American of cities. In choosing 'The Merchant of Venice' as the opening bill of an engagement that promises to be more notable than any of its predecessors, on account of the scope, variety, and extent of the répertoire to be produced, Sir Henry came forward in what is unquestionably the greatest of his serious Shakespearean impersonations, the one above all others which might be selected to prove his greatness as an actor were a choice so circumscribed. Romanticism is the essence of his most successful art, but in Shylock we are given the most powerful illumination of life known in the contemporary stage, the consummation of natural expression in art. . . . The dominant note of Sir Henry Irving's Shylock is primal passion

and racial revolt, in which, with all its implacable ferocity, there is a dignity and grandeur that seem to embody a prophetic inspiration. Altogether it is a strikingly finished study of the character in every detail. Who that has seen that wonderful make-up can ever forget the haunting figure of Shylock, withered and bent, as he leans heavily on his staff, his garb mean and sordid, in contradistinction to the rich furs and materials of the gaberdine in which Mr. Mansfield robed the Jew?"

The visit to the South was one unbroken story of kindliness and triumph. Crowded houses and cordial articles in the newspapers were some compensation for the constant travelling and incessant labour in the theatre. Of the many enthusiastic notices in the press, one or two brief excerpts must suffice. "Had he come to us without any title," said the *Atlanta Constitution*, in an article published before his arrival, "the man who stands at the head of his profession in England, and who is confessedly the greatest producer—using the word in its stage relation—the world has ever had, would excite just the same interest and draw just the same houses. There is every reason why he should, for he has earned his place on the topmost round of the ladder. We will all go to see Irving the actor because he is a great actor, and because he produces great plays with a completeness that has never been attained by any of his predecessors." People came from all parts of the State to attend the performances, and during the whole of the previous night—from six o'clock in the evening until nine o'clock the next morning—there was a constantly increasing crowd of would-be purchasers of tickets at the box-office of the theatre. "What," said the *Constitution*, "a magnificent ovation he received, and what magnificent return he gave for it! In the wildest flights of his fancy, Shakespeare could not have dreamed of such a production of his famous play. However much difference of opinion there may be among critics as to Mr. Irving's portrayal of the great rôles of Shakespeare, there can be no dissenting voice in the verdict that no man has ever given such productions—no, not in the history of the

stage. There has been nothing that could compare with these Irving productions, and it is axiomatic, therefore, that Atlanta has never seen such productions before. No wonder the world calls his Shylock great; it is the Shylock of Shakespeare come to life."

In New Orleans, where seven performances were given, there was a tremendous demand for seats, and the enthusiasm of the press knew no bounds. The presentation of "The Merchant of Venice," said the *Times-Democrat*, "was a splendid one from either a dramatic or a scenic point of view. It was not merely that each scene was realistic to the last degree, stagecraft and scenic care being seemingly exhausted in the creation of fitting effects, but there was an artistic harmony of tone and colour everywhere that told unmistakably of the master-hand of the true artist working in even the smallest details. Henry Irving has often been pronounced the greatest of stage managers, and to his splendid stage productions have been credited much of his phenomenal success as an actor. This is an incorrect and unfair estimate of his dramatic genius, but at the same time the pre-eminence of his stage management must stand unquestioned. Taking his production of 'The Merchant of Venice' last night as a sample, it can only be said that it was adequate. But, after all, this is saying a great deal. It was adequate in that it preserved the dramatic illusion from first to last, but that it did not transcend the limit of adequacy was proven by the fact that even the most splendid of the stage pictures presented never for one moment distracted the attention of the playgoer from the action of the play. The most exquisite harmonies of colouring, the strongest perspectives, and, in short, the most artistic of the stage pictures always blended and harmonised with the development of the story, and they were always wholly subordinate to the dramatic effects. Henry Irving's conception of Shylock is a sublime one. It is the Jewish patriarch of Scripture more than the modern usurer. He portrays at once the grandeur and the failings of his race, but in such a way that the rank injustice which he suffers unwittingly wins for him not a little of the

Photo: Fradelle and Young, London.

HENRY IRVING IN 1890.

sympathies of the audience." What this paper said of the performance generally may be taken as typical of all that was written and said in the South on the subject. All playgoers there had heard of the achievements of Henry Irving elsewhere, but the actor far exceeded their most sanguine expectations.

In addition to his ordinary work in the theatre, Irving had to attend many social functions and run the gauntlet of an army of irrepressible interviewers. At the Players' Club, New York, Foundation Day was duly observed on New Year's eve, when Joseph Jefferson presented to the club a large portrait in oils of Irving as Becket, and Sir Henry sent from Philadelphia a silver pitcher and salver in honour of the celebration. On the 2nd of January he had a busy time, for, with Miss Terry, he gave a performance in the afternoon of "Journeys End in Lovers Meeting" and "A Story of Waterloo" in aid of the Philadelphia Jefferson Maternity Home, acted as usual at night, and then attended a supper in his honour at the Philadelphia Arts Club. In Washington, the visit was a brilliant social success. The President, Grover Cleveland, and Mrs. Cleveland, took a large party to see "King Arthur," and the actor was invited to hear a debate in the Senate Chamber from the private gallery. In New Orleans, he was frequently in the company of Joseph Jefferson. The two actors had much admiration for each other. In New Orleans, Jefferson gave a lecture on the drama to the girls of Newcomb College, who attended in large numbers. Speaking of the ideal and real, he cited "King Arthur" as a glorious example of a poetic play poetically produced. In his opinion, the perfection of the illusion could not be surpassed. A few weeks before that, he had paid another tribute to Irving: "A wonderful man, who lives only for his art. There's not a mean bone in him. He spends money lavishly on his productions, and America owes him a debt of gratitude for what he has taught us about beautiful and accurate stage-settings." Irving was equally generous in his estimation of Jefferson. "I believe," he said, "Joseph Jefferson has got more into the heart

of Bob Acres than any actor since the days of Sheridan. I do not believe that any one has approached him in the part. It is his finest piece of acting—which is saying a great deal, considering how perfect his 'Rip Van Winkle' was."

Even in Richmond, Virginia, although the actor was there for two nights only, he had to attend a banquet in his honour, given by the British Association in that city, with Mr. Alexander Cameron in the chair. Mr. Webb-Peploe, in proposing the health of the chief guest, described him as one who was recognised by the English-speaking world as a master without a peer, while Judge Keith, the honorary President of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, defined him as the greatest living interpreter of the greatest of all dramatists. At St. Louis, Irving made a great hit in an unexpected way. Allusion has already been made to President Cleveland's Message, which had caused a certain amount of irritation and ill-feeling against Great Britain. In response to a call after the performance of "King Arthur," Irving said: "I thank you for your appreciation of this effort to illustrate our Old World legend" —here he paused significantly, and laying special stress upon the next word, added—"your Old World legend". The applause which greeted this masterpiece of diplomacy has seldom been equalled in an American theatre. According to one paper, the incident "tightened the bonds of friendship between the two countries". Irving undoubtedly, at that crucial time, and throughout all his visits to the United States, did his best to promote good feeling between the two peoples. In a quiet, unobtrusive way, he accomplished much in this direction, and he felt a justifiable pride in the result of his endeavour.

Following St. Louis, came a visit of one week to Cincinnati, where several leading articles were devoted to him. "Ordinarily," said the *Tribune*, "the coming of a company of players to a city is not an occasion which calls for that expression of newspaper opinion called 'editorial,' but in all candour it must be said that when the occasion is the reappearance of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, and especially after an absence of twelve years, the usual rule does not apply. The presenta-

tion of such plays as 'King Arthur' and 'Becket' under conditions which afford a trustworthy insight into the life of the periods which they portray, cannot fail to be of importance, in those regards, to the community wherein they are enacted. In these days, when the stage is largely given over to frivolity in varying degrees, without desire to aid in the advancement of genuine culture, no praise is too great for bestowal upon those players who keep a high mission steadfastly in view and work for its advancement." "Genius," said the *Gazette*, "knighted him long before the Queen put the touch of the sword upon his neck; and knees have bowed and heads have been uncovered to him for a decade past, not as a fortunate creature of circumstance, not as one to whom success has flown with open arms, but as a gifted toiler in a sometimes thankless field; a student who burned not his lamp in vain; a genius who has led the stage to its greatest accomplishments, and shown to others a path, though steep and thorny, direct in its ascent to fame, ending at that substantial resting-place where bitterness of criticism or the injustice of jealousy may not dislodge him who attains it. We have been told of the chill that followed the cry of Garrick's Richard awakening in his ghost-haunted tent. Kean, in this same scene, has frozen the marrow of many an auditor; and we in our own time have been made to know the force of the highest tragic acting of Edwin Booth and others whose genius was close akin to his; but Irving's Mathias makes even the bones grow cold, without so much as a cry, for his greatest strength was shown in those scenes calling for quieter acting. Canvas and costumes, properties and environments can do much to give truth and effect to the scenes of a play, but it is only when a genius such as Irving directs these, creates them for a place and a place for them, that they come not only as direct aids, but as an addendum to the work of both actor and author. To describe this wonderful man's acting is a thing utterly impossible in any ordinary and hastily-written review. It would be necessary to follow it through every detail of utterance, movement, and gesture. Mannerisms

might be over-looked, since they are so thoroughly a part of the man, indeed, of every man, that a success that comes in spite of any lack of evenness in figure, gait, or voice is all the more a triumph, and in that an evidence of genius."

At Chicago, on 24th February, an engagement of four weeks was begun. Here, again, leading articles were the order of the day. "The appearance of Sir Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and their co-labourers," said the *Times-Herald*, "raise the theatrical season from the plane of the commonplace to the heights of intellectual recreation and refreshment. To all who value art for art's sake, as well as to all who relish it without knowing why, such performances as these players are giving at the Columbia Theatre must be a matter of profound satisfaction and enjoyment. Henry Irving has done more for the stage than any man of his time. We might go further, and say that, except Shakespeare, he has done more than any man of any time to make the drama vital for the entertainment and the elevation of humanity. It is not alone that he is a great actor, or the founder of a school of acting. He is the founder of a school of dramatic interpretation; and he has so enlisted other fine arts in the service of the dramatic art that the theatre in his hands has become the temple of all the arts, where the devotees of each of them may worship, and where none may say that his own idol is not duly exalted. As Shakespeare re-created the heroes of English history, so Irving has re-created every great character which he has essayed, and endowed with new life and meaning every play which has received his attention. His productions of 'Charles I.,' 'Louis XI.,' 'Hamlet,' 'Macbeth,' 'Becket,' 'Faust,' and 'King Arthur,' are more than classical; they are standard. Henceforth every production of those plays and every dramatic treatment of their themes, in any language and on any stage, must be measured and appraised in the light shed upon them by the genius of Henry Irving. Why wait until Irving is dead and gone to say these things? Why not impress upon the public, now, that here in our community we have the opportunity to

see the greatest living master of the dramatic art, and to view his work? London has come to our doors with her best contributions to the evolution of the art which takes firmest hold on the human mind. Leave it to the critics to point out the flaws in the acting or in the accessories. Compared with the perfections, they are infinitesimal. We are sorry for the man who can witness an Irving production without elevation of soul and the quickening of his intellectual faculties—sorrier still for him who misses these productions altogether."

During the Chicago visit, Irving produced, on 13th March, "Godefroi and Yolande," "the work of my younger son, Laurence". The new play, in one act, dealt with a painful mediæval subject, but it was handled dexterously by the young dramatist who, moreover, was fortunate in having Miss Ellen Terry—"with a wig of bright red hair contrasting with a chalky hue of complexion"—for the leprous-stricken Yolande. On 17th March, Irving delivered his lecture on "Macbeth" in the Kent Theatre of the Chicago University. The rush for seats threatened disastrous consequences, and many people were unable to get within sight of the lecturer and had to go away disappointed. Greeted on his entrance with the university "yell" of welcome in full blast, he seemed, for a moment, to be taken aback, but was reassured by a shout from an admiring student—"He's all right!" While in Chicago, he made a prophecy in regard to American national drama which, in the course of time, will, it is to be hoped, be fulfilled. "The prospects," he thought, "are wonderful, or, rather, will be so. It is almost too early in the life of the American people for the writing of really great plays. But with the lapse of time, the opportunities for enduring work by American dramatists will become more available, more real. There is the Civil War period, for instance—a remarkable field for the coming dramatist. The American nation is too young, the great events in her history are too nearly contemporaneous at this time, however, for the production of great dramatic plays. But, mark you, the time is coming when all the rich material in the history of this remarkable

branch of the Anglo-Saxon peoples will yield fine fruit, and there will be many worthy contributions to the American drama—yea, to the world's drama."

In March, also, Irving suffered the loss of a valued member of his company, Henry Howe, who was taken ill in Cincinnati, and died in that city, as he could not be moved to Chicago. This admirable actor of the old school came of a Quaker family at Norwich, and was born in 1812, so that, at the time of his death, he was eighty-four years of age. He was hale and hearty until stricken with his last illness. Some fourteen years before his death, he met a friend in the Strand. "I am seventy years of age," he said, "and thought that my course was run. Can you believe it? I have just signed an engagement with Irving at a higher salary than I have ever received in my life—twenty-five pounds a week! Never yet had more than sixteen. Just like him!" Among his best work at the Lyceum, Capulet in "Romeo and Juliet," Antonio in "Much Ado About Nothing," and Farmer Flamborough in "Olivia" are still gratefully remembered by many playgoers. A few weeks before his death, he was interviewed by an American journalist, when he paid a gracious tribute to "Sir Henry, my ninth manager, and I need hardly say, one of the kindest, one of the most scholarly, one of the most painstaking artists I have ever been connected with. The sums of money he spends on his productions, the study and time he devotes to make both the production and the interpretation as perfect as possible, are unprecedented in the annals of the stage. When Queen Victoria knighted him at Windsor, she added to the usual formula, 'It gives me very great pleasure, sir'. We all echoed that feeling, for a truer knight, a truer friend, a better man, has never breathed."

In April, the faculty of Princeton University elected Irving an honorary member of the American Whig Society. During his visit in that month to Philadelphia, the actor delivered his lecture on "Macbeth" before a large assembly of the members of the Contemporary Club and their friends in the Academy of Arts. In the same city, he received one morning an address

which read as follows: "The dramatic company of Signora Eleanora Duse, inspired by your lofty art, hold it a duty, to which is added the personal delight, to express to you the sense of their high admiration and gratitude for having revealed to the minds of aliens, through your great talent and by the proud flights of your genius, the sweet idioms of your Shakespeare." This gratifying testimony from the Italian players was signed by Madame Duse and all the members of her company.

The tour concluded in New York with a busy fortnight, which included the presentation of "The Lyons Mail," with which "Godefroi and Yolande" was acted, "Macbeth," "The Merchant of Venice," "Louis XI.," "King Arthur," and "A Story of Waterloo" and "The Bells," in the order named. On the last night, 15th May, Miss Terry acted Lady Soupire in "Journeys End in Lovers Meeting," and Irving, not content with playing "Don Quixote" and "Corporal Brewster" recited "The Dream of Eugene Aram". "The gentle and sweet courtesies we have met with," said Irving in his farewell speech on that night, "fill us with an eager desire to meet you once again. After all, there is but the sea between us, while a firm bond unites us—a common love of our dramatic art." The company sailed for England on the 16th, on the *Etruria*, and Irving, Miss Terry, and some friends left on the 20th, on the *Teutonic*. And thus closed one of the most successful of the Irving tours of America. The departure of the company was lamented by the *New York Herald* as "a distinct loss to the American stage. All that they have undertaken here has been admirable alike in aim and accomplishment. Their influence on the American stage has been thoroughly good, at a time when the tendency was toward lower, not higher, planes of dramatic work. We can ill afford to lose them now, and shall say good-bye with sincere regrets."

Of the artistic success of the tour there was, indeed, no question. During the seven months' visit, 240 performances were given. Despite the fatigues of travelling, acting,

entertaining and being entertained, and the care of management, Irving was in splendid health and full of energy. He smiled at the idea, which had been suggested to him, of early retirement. "Although I am fifty-eight," he said, "and have been forty years on the stage, I feel almost young. I find it hard to realise that I have worked so long in my profession." And he lived to make three other tours of America, to produce five new dramas, to revive two more Shakespearean plays, and to accomplish much other work during the next nine years. His energy at this period was, indeed, unimpaired. He had hardly set foot in Liverpool on his return from America at the end of May before, on the 1st June, he began a tour of five weeks. In a financial sense, large as were his takings, the gain was hardly worth the pains and the expenditure. The following statements of the receipts and expenses of these two tours are a fair example of Irving's enormous outgoings in connection with the theatre. They do not include those for "production," and, of course, his own account, for acts of private charity, was exceedingly heavy. Yet no man of position spent less upon himself. Princely towards others, his own requirements were of the simplest.

The fifth American tour lasted from 16th September, 1895, until 15th May, 1896, and was as follows: 16th to 21st September, Montreal, Academy of Music; 23rd to 28th September, Toronto, Grand Opera House; 30th September to 26th October, Boston, Tremont Theatre; 28th October to 21st December, New York, Abbey's Theatre; 23rd December to 4th January, Philadelphia, Chestnut Street Opera House; 6th to 11th January, Baltimore, Academy of Music; 13th to 18th January, Washington; 20th to 25th January, Richmond, Charleston, Savannah and Atlanta; 27th January to 1st February, New Orleans, Grand Opera House; 3rd to 8th February, Memphis, Nashville, and Louisville; 10th to 15th February, St. Louis, Grand Opera House; 17th to 22nd February, Cincinnati, Grand Opera House; 24th February to 21st March, Chicago, Columbia Theatre; 23rd to 28th March, Indianapolis and Detroit; 30th March to

4th April, Cleveland and Buffalo; 6th to 11th April, Pittsburg; 13th to 18th April, Philadelphia, Chestnut Street Opera House; 20th to 25th April, Boston, Tremont Theatre; 27th April to 2nd May, Providence, Springfield, Hartford, and New Haven; 4th to 15th May, New York, Abbey's Theatre. The repertory consisted of "Macbeth," "Becket," "King Arthur," "The Merchant of Venice," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Louis XI.," "Faust," "Charles the First," "The Lyons Mail," "Nance Oldfield," "The Bells," "The Corsican Brothers," "Don Quixote," "Journeys End in Lovers Meeting," and "A Story of Waterloo".

The gross receipts, given according to the plays, were:—

	Performances.	$ c.	£ s. d.
"King Arthur"	74	190,507 50	39,361 1 0
"The Merchant of Venice"	53	140,633 75	29,056 11 2
"The Bells" and sundry pieces	28	62,024 25	12,814 18 7
"Macbeth"	21	46,874 25	9,684 15 3
"Faust"	13	22,278 50	4,602 19 11
"Becket"	10	20,204 75	4,174 10 9
"Don Quixote" and sundry pieces	10	18,309 50	3,782 19 2
"Louis XI."	9	19,383 0	4,004 15 0
"The Lyons Mail" and sundry pieces	9	17,658 50	3,648 9 0
"Much Ado About Nothing"	6	9,418 50	1,945 19 5
"The Corsican Brothers" and sundry pieces	2	3,339 50	689 19 7
"Charles I."	1	1,981 0	409 5 11
Excerpts from various plays (farewell nights at different towns)	4	11,328 50	2,340 12 0
	240	$563,941 50	£116,516 16 9

Of this huge sum, Irving took the lion's share—$366,561 89c., or, in English money, £75,735 18s. 6d. But, as his expenses were $334,548 10c., or, £69,121 10s. 2d., the profit, £6614 8s. 4d., was relatively small. The largest item in the expenses account was that for the salaries of the company (exclusive of chorus and supernumeraries). This came to $267,250, more than £53,000. For the provincial tour, the accounts were:—

RECEIPTS BY PLAYS.

	Performances.	Total. £	s.	d.	Average a Night. £	s.	d.
"The Merchant of Venice" . .	10	3,161	2	0	316	2	2
"The Bells" and "Nance Oldfield"	8	2,715	8	6	339	8	6
"King Arthur"	12	3,663	12	6	305	6	0
	30	£9,540	3	0			

RECEIPTS BY TOWNS.

Week ending	Towns.	Theatres.	£	s.	d.
June 6	Liverpool	Court	1,774	16	0
,, 13	Manchester	Royal	1,995	10	6
,, 20	Edinburgh	Lyceum	1,838	1	6
,, 27	Glasgow	Royal	1,847	8	6
July 4	Newcastle-on-Tyne[1]	Tyne	2,084	6	6
,, ,,	Leeds[1]	Grand			
			£9,540	3	0
	Expenses		7,731	13	8
	Profit		£1,808	9	4

The expenses for this provincial tour were :—

	£	s.	d.
Salaries	3,852	18	0
Hotel	100	0	0
Postage and newspapers	25	10	11
Telegrams and cables	18	3	6
Banking	0	3	7
Petty cash	24	3	11
Sundries	9	17	11
Gratuities	56	6	0
Share (30 per cent. less £40) . . .	2,662	1	3
Printing	81	8	0
Advertising	30	8	8
Travel	442	9	10
Supers	102	10	6
Chorus	31	10	0
Carpenters	69	17	0
Properties	87	17	8
Wardrobe	6	11	4
Dressers	0	11	6
Gas	5	15	0
Limes	2	5	1
Band	52	16	0
Author's fees	68	8	0
	£7,731	13	8

[1] Three nights each.

It will thus be seen that the combined profits of the American (£6614 8s. 4d.) and the provincial (£1808 9s. 4d.) tours came to £8422 17s. 8d.—a small sum, in the circumstances. Yet this was a good season, and, as it so fell out, Irving did not again enjoy such a continuous period of prosperity. Fortunately, however, he could not see into the immediate future, and he had no knowledge of the disappointments which were in store for him. So, after spending a week or so in London—which was chiefly occupied in superintending the preparations for the revival of "Cymbeline" in the autumn, and during which time he was one of the guests at Queen Victoria's garden party at Buckingham Palace on 13th July—he spent a few days with friends in Edinburgh, and then went, in continuation of his holiday, to Bamborough, on the coast of Northumberland—a place famed by reason of its association with Grace Darling. Here he was visited by his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Irving (Miss Dorothea Baird). After a brief stay in North Berwick, he returned to London towards the end of August, and was one of the pall-bearers at the funeral of Sir John Millais, in St. Paul's Cathedral. In the death of Millais, Irving lost a sincere friend. Millais' portrait of Irving, painted in 1889, hangs in a conspicuous place in the Garrick Club.

CHAPTER XV.

September, 1896—December, 1897.

"Cymbeline" revived—Letter to Mr. Pinero—The twenty-fifth anniversary of "The Bells"—Revival of "Richard III."—Irving hurts his knee—Absent from the Lyceum for two months in consequence—Warm welcome on his return—His "splendidly Satanic" rendering of Richard III.—Events in connection with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee—Soldiers and Premiers invited to the Lyceum—Chairman of the Drama section, Victorian Era Exhibition—An honour from Germany—French opinion on his acting—Reads "Becket" in the chapter-house of Canterbury Cathedral—Unveils statue of Mrs. Siddons—Provincial tour—Recalls his early days in Birmingham—Death of his favourite dog.

ALTHOUGH celebrated actors have appeared as Posthumus and Iachimo, "Cymbeline," is not a play to tempt the theatrical manager who desires to enrich his treasury. The greatest popularity ever accorded to the piece was due to the impersonation of Imogen by Helen Faucit. The play is, indeed, only suited for the exploitation of the art of the actress, and Iachimo is not a part of sufficient scope for an actor who holds a high place with the public. Miss Ellen Terry won praise on all sides for her beautiful rendering of Imogen. She obtained such success as is possible in the part. Her individual triumph, however, could not ensure the popularity of the play. Irving in his revival, which took place on 22nd September, 1896, elected to appear as Iachimo, and, although he gave a new view of the part, based upon Iachimo's sudden conversion in the last act, he endeavoured to read into the character more than it actually contains. His portrait was that of a man whose villainy is the outcome less of a tempestuous nature than of deliberate intention. "Sir Henry, as is his wont," said one of the most observant of critics, "inclines towards what is subtle and analytical rather than to the

obvious. Yet in a measure the play suffers in point of plausibility by the very thoughtfulness and the earnestness of an actor whose work has always been indentified with these qualities. His performance is one of peculiar power and imaginativeness—full of masterly touches, and at times almost

CYMBELINE.

Revived at the Lyceum, 22nd September, 1896.

BRITONS:

Cymbeline	Mr. Macklin.
Cloten	Mr. Norman Forbes.
Posthumus Leonatus	Mr. Frank Cooper.
Belarius	Mr. Frederic Robinson.
Guiderius	Mr. Ben Webster.
Arviragus	Mr. Gordon Craig.
Pisanio	Mr. Tyars.
Cornelius	Mr. Lacy.
Two British Captains	Mr. Archer. / Mr. Needham.
Two British Lords	Mr. Clarence Hague. / Mr. Belmore.
Queen	Mr. Geneviève Ward.
Helen	Mr. Tyars.
Imogen	Miss Ellen Terry.

ROMANS:

Iachimo	Henry Irving.
Philario	Mr. Fuller Mellish.
Caius Lucius	Mr. H. Cooper-Cliffe.
A Roman Captain	Mr. Tabb.

Act I., Scene 1. Britain—Garden of Cymbeline's Palace; Scene 2. Rome—Philario's House, The Triclinium. Act II., Scene 1. Britain—Room in the Palace; Scene 2. Britain—Before the Palace; Scene 3. Britain—Imogen's Bedchamber. Act III., Scene 1. Britain—Garden of the Palace; Scene 2. Rome—Philario's House, The Atrium; Scene 3. Britain—Room in the Palace. Act IV., Scene 1. Wales—Before the Cave of Belarius; Scene 2. Wales—Near Milford Haven; Scene 3. Britain—Cymbeline's Palace; Scene 4. Wales—Before the Cave; Scene 5. Wales—Near the Cave; Scene 6. Wales—Before the Cave. Act V., Scene 1. Britain—Near the Roman Camp; Scene 2. Britain—The Field of Battle; Scene 3. Britain—Another part of the Field; Scene 4. Britain—Cymbeline's Tent.

demoniacal in its intensity. Nor would it be easy to conceive a more striking or pathetic spectacle than that of the humble and contrite Iachimo, a strange but sad expression of nobility upon his face, as in the tent scene he stands abased before his victors, in presence of the injured Posthumus and Imogen."

Excellent actors were employed for the other chief parts, but, with few exceptions they were unsatisfactory. The stage pictures were remarkable for the richness of their colouring and the harmony of their design, and their correctness was ensured by the assistance in their preparation of Mr. Alma-Tadema. The battle scenes were particularly impressive, the final tableau in the second scene of the last act being "of a rare and singularly majestic beauty". The elements of popularity were, however, lacking, and there were only fifty-two consecutive performances of "Cymbeline". Then came "The Bells," and several other representations of "Cymbeline," which was acted for seventy-two nights in all, during 1896.

The following characteristic letter was written by Irving to Mr. Pinero in reference to "Cymbeline":—

"15A GRAFTON STREET,
"BOND STREET, W.

"My DEAR PINERO,

"I was delighted to get your letter and my hearty thanks are yours for the admirable suggestion, which I have put into practice greatly—and certainly to the advantage of the performance.

"It is a 'funny' play, isn't it?—and I was glad when I found that it had engaged your practical interest in our stage manœuvres—but if I am 'Sir Henry' any more, I shall have to address you, old friend, as 'Field Marshal'.

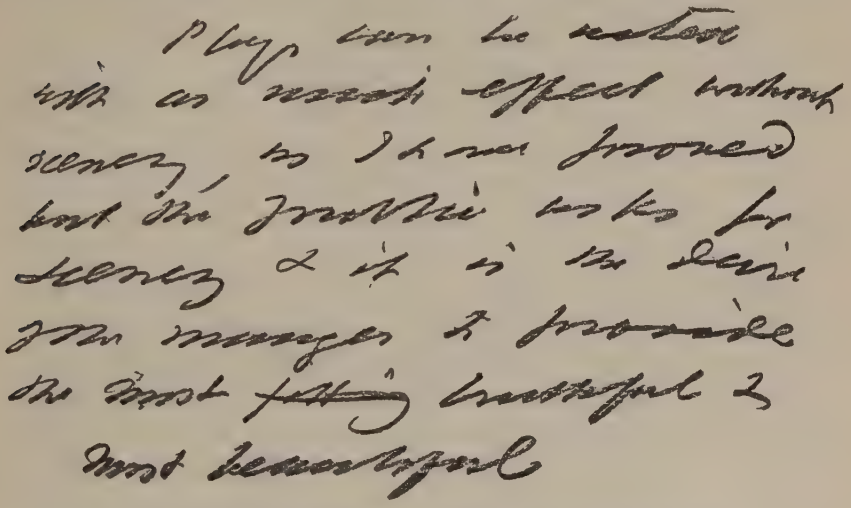
"Sincerely always,
"HENRY IRVING.

"10*th October*, 1896."

Note by Mr. Pinero.—"I had written to him after the production of 'Cymbeline' suggesting some alteration in the stage business. His reply shows the amiability with which he could receive such impertinences"—as the distinguished author modestly describes his suggestions—"I must have called him 'Sir Henry'.—A.W.P."

An event of singular interest took place on 25th November—the twenty-fifth anniversary of the production of "The Bells". The representative of Mathias never acted with more intensity or effect than on that occasion. He was proud, and

justly so, of his record in connection with this part, and when, at the end of the performance, he was obliged to say a few words of thanks, he spoke gratefully of the loyalty of his old manager, Bateman, who, although he had no faith in "The Bells," before the production, gave his support to the wishes of the actor. But the success of the piece was entirely due to Irving, and it was a kindly thought which prompted him to allude to Bateman on this memorable night, the anniversary of the turning-point in his career. A gratifying and unexpected ceremony took place during the evening, the entire



"Plays can be acted with as much effect without scenery, as I have proved, but the public asks for scenery and it is the desire of the managers to provide the most truthful and most beautiful."—HENRY IRVING, in 1896.

company, from the lowest to the highest, asking the actor to accept a mediæval silver bell designed by Mr. Alfred Gilbert. Sir Henry, evidently much touched, returned thanks for this homage in a few words, in the course of which he spoke of the harmony that had so long subsisted among the whole company at the Lyceum.

One of the minor events of this period of his life deserves to be chronicled. On 24th October, Irving laid the founda-

tion stone of the Dulwich Public Library, which stands as a memorial to Edward Alleyn, the founder of the college hard by. He took advantage of the opportunity to eulogise, once more, the profession which owes so much to him. Replying to the vote of thanks, he said that to him, "as a player," it was an added pleasure that the building was to be erected on ground given by a player of noble heart for the public good: "Edward Alleyn, friend and companion of Shakespeare, his comrade in art, a successful, and therefore much-abused, actor-manager, was a man of uncommon talents. From small beginnings, he honourably acquired an excellent fortune, the whole of which he devoted to the public weal. For nearly three centuries, his forethought and charity had borne increasingly good fruit." In the previous July, in his speech at the unveiling in Aldermanbury of a monument to Heminge and Condell, Irving had taken the same tone—"these two players, who lived in affectionate friendship with another player, William Shakespeare."

Saturday, 19th December, 1896, is an ominous date in the life-story of Henry Irving. On that evening he revived "Richard III.," and, on his return to his rooms in Grafton Street after the performance, slipped on the tortuous stairs, and hurt his knee with such disastrous results that he was unable to act again for over two months. This was the first of many great trials which came to him during the last years of his career—all of which were borne with unflinching resolution, absolute self-possession, and an indomitable pride which only endeared him the more to those few people who knew his many troubles and could appreciate the calmness of mien with which he bore them. At the time of the accident to his knee it happened, with remarkable misfortune, that Miss Terry was not well enough to play. Accordingly, the theatre was re-opened, on 26th December, with a reproduction of "Cymbeline," with the American actress, Miss Julia Arthur, a member of the company, as Imogen, Mr. Frank Cooper again as Posthumus, and his brother, Mr. Cooper-Cliffe, as Iachimo. Eleven performances were given to poor receipts,

and, after 8th January, the house was closed until 23rd January, when Miss Ellen Terry "refreshed by a holiday in the south of France," rejoined the company and re-appeared as Imogen. The 88th and last performance of "Cymbeline" at the Lyceum took place on 29th January. On the following evening, "Olivia" was revived, with Miss Terry as the heroine and Mr. Hermann Vezin as Dr. Primrose. There were nineteen representations of that drama.

By the middle of January, Irving had so far recovered that he was enabled to journey to Sevenoaks for a change of scene and air, and, on 27th February, 1897, he returned to the Lyceum and resumed the revival of "Richard III." His entrance in the first act was the signal for a volley of cheers such as even the Lyceum had rarely heard. It was fully three minutes before the applause subsided sufficiently for Irving to begin the opening soliloquy. At the fall of the curtain on the last act, there were loud cries for a speech, and the actor-manager, instead of dwelling upon his own woes, reminded the audience that the occasion was the birthday of his friend and colleague, Miss Ellen Terry, and he asked his friends in the front of the house to join him in wishing her many happy returns of the anniversary—a graceful request which met with a warm response. The unusual events which followed the revival of the play in December tended to obscure the fact that Irving's acting on that night, and again in the early part of 1897, was no less striking than when he first played Richard in 1877. His later rendering was, perhaps, a little more highly-coloured, and it contained one or two touches which verged on the melodramatic. His grand interpretation was an extraordinarily close picture of the scheming, plausible unprincipled tyrant, who is prepared to wade through a river of blood, and even to sacrifice his own accomplices, in order that he may reach the throne. In the first scene, he struck the note of mocking villainy which was the prevailing idea of his impersonation. One of the most gifted essayists and critics of the latter part of the last century was the late J. F. Nisbet, for several years the dramatic critic of the *Times*.

He was particularly impressed by certain attributes of Irving's Richard. "Irving's personality," he wrote, "happens to be peculiarly rich in the elements of the weird, the sinister, the sardonic, the grimly humorous, the keenly intellectual; and any character into which these qualities can be introduced by him remains indelibly stamped upon the mind as a great creation. As a compendium of the Irving personality, I am not sure that Richard does not excel in considerable measure both Louis XI. and Mephistopheles. The new Richard holds the spectator as securely with his glittering eye as ever did the Ancient Mariner; and a curious effect, which I have never seen before remarked at the Lyceum, where so high a standard of excellence is maintained, is that in the presence of this colossal Plantagenet villain all the other dramatis personae are dwarfed to nothingness. Absolutely, Irving's Richard is the most Satanic character I have ever seen on the stage."

Tennyson considered Richard III. one of Irving's two best performances—Philip, in "Queen Mary," being the other. "I often wonder," he said, in 1878, "where he gets his distinctively *Plantagenet* look." The Plantagenet was evident not only in Irving's appearance as Richard, but in his acting. A writer in 1897, alluding to the lines spoken by Richard

> I was born so high,
> Our aerie buildeth in the cedar's top,
> And dallies with the wind and scorns the sun—

said the actor realised this idea throughout. "Someone," he continued, has described this Richard as "'splendidly Satanic'. I echo the phrase, particularly on remembering the opening soliloquy, the wooing of Lady Anne, the interview with the young princes, the outburst against Hastings, and the profound dissimulation in the presence of the Lord Mayor. One of the most finely-imagined pictures I have seen on the stage was that in which, after the acceptance of the crown, Richard, from behind the convenient shelter of that prayer-book, darted a triumphant look at Buckingham. Of the last scene, the actor gave us an entirely new reading. Richard went to battle as became a warrior, but not without a presentiment of

his approaching end. Unlike the old, barn-storming actors, he presented himself in a despairing mood; if not exactly conscience-stricken :—

> I have not that alacrity of spirit
> Nor cheer of mind that I was wont to have.

In uttering the lines—

> There is no creature loves me,
> And if I die no soul shall pity me—

he dropped his hands, as it were unconsiously, about a crucifix on the the table in the tent—a master touch."

"Richard III." was played until 7th April, and, on Saturday, the 10th of that month, there was produced, for the first time in English, "Madame Sans-Gêne," a comedy which had been specially written by M. Victorien Sardou for Madame Réjane. Irving, who witnessed the play when the French company appeared in it in London, at the Gaiety Theatre, bought the rights of the piece with a view to enabling Miss Ellen Terry to distinguish herself in a part in which many people anticipated failure for her. But Irving was right in his judgment. Miss Terry adapted herself to the character of the good-hearted, but vulgar, washerwoman who subsequently became the wife of the brave soldier, Lefebre. The scenes in which "Madame Sans-Gêne, now Duchess of Dantzig, figures in connection with her dancing-master, her shoemaker, and her milliner, although conceived in a spirit of the broadest comedy, are amusing, as well as deeply-interesting as the revelation of a comparatively new aspect of Miss Ellen Terry's many-sided genius," it was written. The actress, however, was at her best in the passages of pure comedy between Catherine and Napoleon. She made, indeed, a complete success in a character which was vastly different from any which she had hitherto taken. But we are more nearly concerned with Henry Irving's embodiment of Napoleon—a singularly convincing performance. The manner in which he managed to submerge his own personality beneath that of the character he represented, was a triumph of skill. He con-

trived, despite his own height, to convey an accurate idea of "le petit caporal," and even to mould his own features into a remarkable resemblance to those of the French Emperor. There was a splendid cast, the costumes were as rich as they were accurate, and the comedy was well received. The one thing against it at the Lyceum was the fact that Napoleon only appeared as a comparatively minor character. The play was essentially a woman's play; Irving's share in it, as an actor, was very slight. The little he had to do was done to the best of his ability, but the accomplishment was hardly worth the pains.

There were twenty-nine consecutive performances of "Madame Sans-Gêne". After that, Sardou's comedy shared the honours of the season with "The Bells" and "The Merchant of Venice". There was a notable performance on the afternoon of Friday, the 25th June. On that day, Irving gave a private representation of "A Story of Waterloo" and "The Bells" before a large number of the Indian and Colonial troops who were in London in connection with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. It was a kindly act, and, in the circumstances, an exceedingly generous one, for him to extend such an invitation. On Monday evening, 28th June, he invited the Colonial premiers to witness the same programme, and, after the performance, entertained them at supper on the stage, together with a large crowd of other notabilities. In connection with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, it should also be stated that the Players' Address to Her Majesty was, as a matter of course, sent from the Lyceum, and all the work in connection with obtaining the signatures of the actors and actresses attached to it was done under Irving's supervision. He was also the chairman of the Drama section of the Victorian Era Exhibition at Earl's Court, the organising secretary of that section —which comprised an exhibition of hundreds of pictures, playbills, books, prints, and scenes, illustrative of the English stage for the sixty years' reign—being the writer of this biography, who was thus brought into constant touch with

the actor. Irving, occupied as he was with his own affairs, gave much of his time to this part of the exhibition, and his advice was a great help to the section and to the secretary thereof.

As was inevitable, as a result of Irving's long absence from the Lyceum in the winter of 1896-97, the expenses of the season exceeded the receipts by nearly £10,000. The production account was as follows: "Cymbeline," £4154 12s. 7d.; "Richard III." £2142 10s. 5d.; "Madame Sans-Gêne," £3587 3s. 6d.

As usual, Irving was much occupied with affairs not directly concerned with the theatre. Among other things in May, for instance, he took the chair at a dinner at the Hôtel Métropole on behalf of the Royal Society of Musicians. In the early part of that month, he opened a collection of pictures at Stratford Town Hall, and, in the course of his speech, he made a humorous allusion to the class of persons who look askance at the playhouse. "Your theatre, I see," he said, "is called an Opera House: I suppose because you so seldom have operas here. I know there is a very great objection in the minds of many people to call a spade a spade, and many object to call a theatre a theatre. That is not your opinion, I am sure; but I know very well that thousands of very estimable people go to see a play at the Crystal Palace who would be horrified if they were asked to see it in a theatre—even a theatre conducted on the excellent and respectable principles of the Lyceum!" In May, also, Irving received an additional honour—this time from Germany. The Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen united in conferring upon him the Komthur (Commander) Cross of the Ernestine Order of the Second Class. This was the first instance of a foreign order being bestowed upon an English actor, as such.

Irving received, during the period, two other special compliments from the continent. M. Jules Claretie, whose praise of Irving in 1879 has already been quoted, spent a brief holiday in London, and subsequently wrote an article

in the *Figaro* in which he described the Lyceum presentation of "Madame Sans-Gêne" as faultless. Another distinguished French writer, M. Augustin Filon, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, said some pleasant things about the head of the English stage. "We have before us," he wrote, "one of those rare careers which are so perfectly ordered towards the accomplishment of some end by a resolute and inflexible will that there is to be found in them no single wasted minute or ill-directed endeavour." In noting one of Irving's sayings, "the learning how to do a thing is the doing of it," that, commented M. Filon, "is one of the most thoroughly English aphorisms ever given out". Triumphing as Hamlet, "he continued to make himself master of all the great Shakespearean rôles like a conqueror annexing provinces. Of course, he was not equally good in all, though to all he brought his understanding and his inspiration, and to all gave the stamp of his individuality. He is too great for many of his rôles; is out of elbow in them, so to speak. He himself has told us that the first duty of an actor is to fit his part, to be the character, to personate; and it must be admitted that, in following this principle, he has given proof of a versatility unsurpassed by Garrick himself; yet it would seem that the greater he has grown by study and thought (with the growth of his years and his fame), it has become more and more difficult for him to squeeze himself into the smaller personalities he has had to represent on the stage, to sink in them that magnetic individuality of his own which constitutes his power." "Irving," continued this acute French critic, "seems to me— may I venture to say it without seeming unappreciative of the excellent and even great actors of whom our great country can boast?—to be pre-eminent in his art, the leader of his profession. He compels this admission by the beauty and unity of his life, by the splendid strength of his vocation, by the magnificent variety of his gifts, by his intelligent feeling for all the other arts and for the other ideas which belong to the spirit of the time. And, on the other hand, by the slow growth, the gradual development of his talent, by his spirit of independence

and initiative, tempered by regard for the past, he is one of the incarnations of his race, one of those men in whom to-day we see most clearly the features of the English character. He has failed in nothing—he has not even failed to make a fortune. And in respect to this, should any one charge it against him as a fault, he has given his defence in a saying which I shall quote in conclusion as a finishing touch to his portrait: 'The drama must succeed as a business, if it is not to fail as an art'. And in truth, does Shakespeare cease to be Shakespeare because in Irving's hand he is also a mine of gold?" Would that Irving had indeed "made money"!

One of the greatest compliments ever bestowed upon Henry Irving, at this or any other time, was the invitation to read scenes from "Becket" in the chapter-house of Canterbury Cathedral, within a few yards of the very spot where the great Archbishop was done to death. Erected in the fifteenth century by Courtenay and Arundel, this chapter-house, with its circular stone bench for the monks of old, over whom the prior and other dignities sat, had been restored and renovated. It was re-opened by the Prince of Wales on Saturday, 29th May, and on the Monday following, the 31st, Irving—who had journeyed to Canterbury on the Sunday—gave the reading. The invitations were issued personally by the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Farrar. It is a fact of great moment in the career of Henry Irving that, as was pointed out at the time, "a player, however gifted, scholarly, and self-respecting, should be asked to read a play within the precincts of a cathedral which for so many centuries has been the ecclesiastical centre of England". The proceeds of the reading, it may be stated, were in aid of the Thirteenth Centenary Fund for the restoration of the cathedral.

The distinguished audience received the actor with much cheering as he passed between the rows of seats to the platform. He was formally introduced by Dean Farrar, whose words were a gratifying token of the good feeling between church and stage which Irving had been so instrumental in creating. "It is my pleasant duty," he said, "to occupy one

moment, and it can only be one moment, in introducing Sir Henry Irving. In one sense, no sort of introduction is necessary, for Sir Henry is known not only throughout the length and breadth of England, but amongst the English-speaking race throughout the world as one whose genius and steadfast purpose has brought before us, in a way unsurpassed for splendour, many of the glorious dramas of our greatest poet, Shakespeare—the most gifted and myriad-minded man whom the world has known ; and he has throughout all his life endeavoured to purify the stage and to make it what it has been in past ages and with other nations, what it may be and now constantly is among us, not only a source of pleasure and amusement, but a stimulus to the imagination, and an element of thoughtful teaching, brought more vividly home to the mind through the medium of the eyes. We shall now have the high pleasure of hearing our foremost living actor interpret for us the drama of the late Laureate, the foremost poet of our age ; and it should be a deeply interesting illustration of the career of Archbishop Becket, which, in consequence of his tragic murder within fifty yards of this place, so profoundly influenced for four centuries the history of this Cathedral. Ladies and Gentlemen, few know as I know how much labour, how much self-sacrifice, how much generosity, have gone to enable Sir Henry to render us this conspicuous service to-day. I am quite sure that we shall unite in giving him a hearty and cordial welcome, and shall rejoice that so many eminent Englishmen in every rank and position have united to help us in the celebration of our thirteenth centenary. The word 'thanks' is a very short word ; it is only a monosyllable, but I will ask Sir Henry to believe that it is spoken with warm sincerity by us all to-day."

Irving, in a brief acknowledgment of this eloquent testimony to his work, said that it gave him great delight to attend there that day, a day that would be memorable to him as being associated with the thought of a great Archbishop and with the life and memory of a great poet—the author of the play. He then proceeded to read from a copy of

Photo: H. H. H Cameron.

BECKET.

"Becket" printed in extra large type, and placed upon a pedestal covered with purple cloth supported on a temporary platform against the wall. The reading occupied rather less than three hours, and consisted of a selection of the more important scenes, particularly those in which Becket, the King, Queen Eleanor, and Rosamund are chiefly concerned. The actor was in excellent voice, and his reading frequently aroused the enthusiasm of his hearers. He also had the advantage of assistance, in the dramatic closing passages, of circumstances which were as fortunate as they were entirely unforeseen. "Sir Henry Irving," said the *Daily Telegraph*, in describing the incident, "was lucky enough to be assisted also yesterday by an impressive and unrehearsed effect. Just as the story of Becket's martyrdom was advancing step by step to the dreadfulness of doom, we who listened with rapt attention to the recital heard in the far away distance, soft and low, the pure voices of the choristers in the old Cathedral singing the even song, and the exquisitely plaintive moaning of the old organ, whose unresisting voice grew fainter and fainter as it seemed to caress the roof and pillars of the lovely nave and decorated choir. As an effect, the thing was perfect. No stage-manager in the world could have equalled it, and it contrasted most favourably with the little bell that was tinkled in the Chapter House to suggest the call to vespers, and the strains of the harmonium intended to give a suggestion of cathedral music. The choristers and the organ did all that was needed unawares, and, all unknown, illustrated one portion of the sainted martyrdom with surpassing effect. At the conclusion of the recital, the patient but absorbed audience, after a few moments of reverie, broke out into unrestrained applause. . . . Believe me, all who heard that impressive story will understand it better than before, for Sir Henry Irving made it live again in the triumphant Cathedral Chapter House, he wafted it to the distant church, he seemed to sing the Tennysonian lyrics to peaceful grass-grown cloisters, and to make Lord Tennyson's glorious verse awaken to renewed life the dead echoes of old Canterbury."

At the close, the Mayor of Canterbury proposed a vote of thanks to the reader. It was announced that the Restoration Fund was enriched by £215, as the result of the reading and of Irving's generosity, for he bore the incidental expenses.

On Monday, 14th June, the first public monument to a player ever erected in London was unveiled by Henry Irving. This is the statue of Sarah Siddons, on Paddington Green, near the grave of the famous actress. Many of Mrs. Siddons' kith and kin, including the Dean of Hereford, whose wife's mother, Fanny Kemble, was a niece of the actress, were present. Irving made a felicitous speech, in the course of which he said: "It is a great pride to me to unveil this statue, and to congratulate the inhabitants of Paddington on the possession of so admirable a memorial of a famous Englishwoman. London is rich in statues, chiefly of people whom Nature did not expressly design to be immortalised in that particular way. Few men or women look well in marble or bronze, but to-day you see one of the ideal models of the sculptor's art, a great actress whose personal majesty is eloquent even in the silence of stone. It was said of Sarah Siddons by Hazlitt that 'she was not less than a goddess or prophetess inspired by the gods. Power was seated on her brow, passion radiated from her breast as from a shrine; she was tragedy personified.' I think I can catch the spirit of that panegyric from her impressive figure, so admirably designed and executed by M. L. Chavalliaud which is set up in your midst to-day. By the acclamation of her contemporaries, Mrs. Siddons was hailed as the incarnation of the sublime in the expression of dramatic passion. I have lately read that this ideal of the sublime is a mere superstition belonging to a world of art and emotion which has definitely passed away. This, I need hardly say, was an expression of opinion from a very enthusiastic admirer of the eccentric Mr. Ibsen. It will pass away when the creations of Shakespeare become obsolete, when the highest poetry ceases to influence the soul of mankind—conditions which make the fulfilment of such a prophecy unspeakably remote. Methods of execution in art may vary

from age to age ; but in this monument you have a standard of conception which has made the name of Siddons imperishable. To some characters in Shakespeare, such as Lady Macbeth and Volumnia, she gave a tradition which has not been effaced. Moreover, in honouring her memory you are paying a lasting tribute to a quality which is the perpetual stimulus to ambition in every walk of life. To every young man who looks upon this statue I would say, 'This is not only the image of a great actress, it is the image of indomitable energy and perseverance. When she came to London first she was a conspicuous failure. She went back to the hard school of the provincial theatre, and matured her powers by unflagging industry. This is no memorial of casual and irresponsible genius, but a triumphant witness to the merits of those comrades-in-arms of all true endeavour—application and a stout heart'. Another noteworthy point of the monument is that it is the first statue of a player which has been erected in London. I am not suggesting this as a precedent for the future embellishment of advantageous sites ; but in itself it is a considerable portent. There are statues of Shakespeare, and the dramatic profession does not forget that Shakespeare was an actor, and that but for his connection with the stage it is improbable that he would have enriched our dramatic literature. However, it is for Shakespeare the poet that we have raised trophies for triumphal show, and we have before us to-day a striking proof of that public spirit which has sacrificed an ancient social prejudice in homage to a great actress which needs no better evidence than the generous gift of the site by the vestry of Paddington, together with their handsome provision of the basement of the statue. This is a monument of enlightened tolerance which would have surprised most people in Sarah Siddons' lifetime. It shows, moreover, that the work and influence of the actor are not quite ephemeral. Mrs. Siddons died a very few years before our gracious sovereign came to the throne, and amongst the evidences of that spread of ideas which has distinguished her Majesty's long and glorious reign, I think we may claim this

permanent recognition of the genius of a woman who shed lustre upon her generation and stood pre-eminent amongst the race of great English actors."

Irving spent his brief holiday at Sheringham, Norfolk, and early in September—on the 6th—started a tour which lasted until 18th December, and included the following places: Stratford (E.), Camberwell, Cardiff, Birmingham, Nottingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Liverpool, Bradford, and Wolverhampton. He made, fortunately, a handsome profit—£7095 19s. 2d.—which nearly recouped him for his losses in his last season at the Lyceum. The table of Irving's receipts, according to the plays, is made up thus:—

	Performances.	£	s.	d.
"Waterloo" and "The Bells"	34	8,336	15	9
"The Merchant of Venice" .	14	4,495	12	3
"Madame Sans-Gêne" . .	56	16,094	16	9
	104	£28,927	4	9

In one of the speeches which he made during this tour, he alluded, in humorous fashion, to his early life on the stage. On 1st October, he was entertained in Birmingham, by the Clef Club. In replying to the toast of his health, which had been proposed by the chairman of the club, Mr. Whitworth Wallis, he said: "Birmingham recalls to me the days of my apprenticeship, when suppers were scarce, and people were so much occupied that they had not very much time to propose my health. Long before the days of my dear old friend—God bless him—whose son is sitting by me to-night, 'Jimmie' Rogers, that many of us knew so well and loved so well, long before he came to Birmingham, and thirty years ago, I was an actor in this city; then, I believe, it was called a town. The toast was generally 'the town and trade

of Birmingham'. I remember joining in that toast very well at a little house at the corner, the 'Woodman'; but the woodman has not spared that tree—it has now some fashionable stables at the back. I was then engaged at the theatre at the very handsome salary of £4 a week—intermittently paid. The manager of that theatre had a habit of inviting his actors into his private room, lavishly giving them cigars and borrowing half-crowns. I have never understood thoroughly whether the half-crowns were intended to pay for the cigars, or whether they passed from one actor to another through the manager's hands on account of a little overdue salary, or whether the habit that my friend the manager had of borrowing half-crowns was an original way of asserting friendship. At all events, when a man of that familiar and interesting individuality ceases to ask for half-crowns you may be sure that something is wrong. It was so wrong that our company found themselves transported to a more distant town where they were left high and dry with neither manager nor cash, and my dream of £4 a week was over for a long time."

During the last week but one of the tour, Irving suffered the loss of a faithful companion, his dog "Fussy". In the course of his life, he had several canine friends, "Trin," "Charlie," and "Fussy". The first of the trio, a rough-haired terrior, with light-brown curly hair, was so-called out of compliment to Trinity College, Dublin, the students of which, in 1876, had presented him with an address. "Trin" came to grief in 1878, and was succeeded by a beautiful Skye terrier, "Charlie," a great pet. Irving often spoke of this dog with affection. "Charlie" accompanied his master on the early tours in America, and Irving, writing to a friend in 1884, from Washington, put a special postscript to his letter: "Charlie sends love". In 1890, in reply to an inquiry, he wrote: "Charlie has been dead some years, but we keep his memory green". When "Fussy," the last of his dogs, and the most loved, died, he received many sympathetic letters, in reply to one of which he wrote as follows:—

"*21st December*, 1897.

"DEAR MRS. GODDARD,

"Many thanks for your sympathetic letter about the dear old friend. He is much missed.

"Sincerely yours,

"HENRY IRVING."

Mrs. Goddard, now an old lady of ninety, points out that the letter in question is in the hand-writing of Mr. Austin, who had written "dear old dog," and that Irving had substituted "friend" for the last word—a small thing, but one that shows how he felt for his pet. "Fussy," a fox-terrier, given to Irving by Miss Ellen Terry, fell through a trap-door in the stage of the Theatre Royal, Manchester, and was killed instantly. The news of the death of his "friend" was kept from him until after the performance. Irving did not utter a word. He pressed the body of the dead dog to his heart and passed silently out of the play-house, with "Fussy" close to his breast.

CHAPTER XVI.

1898, 1899-1900.

Fortitude in trouble—Two failures in succession—Destruction of scenery for many plays—Invited by Cardinal Vaughan to assist the cause of charity—His generous response—Appears at Archbishop's house—A successful result—Cambridge confers a degree—The promise of a successful tour—Long and serious illness in Glasgow—Recovery and convalescence—"Richard II." abandoned—University of Glasgow confers a degree—Sale of his books—Letters to Sam Johnson and Mr. Pinero—Speech at Glasgow—"Robespierre"—Sails for America—His sixth tour there—Wonderful receipts, but hard travelling—His unfailing kindness—Letter to an American lady.

THE accident which occurred to Henry Irving in December, 1896, and the monetary losses which followed, were small troubles in comparison with those of 1898. In the beginning of that year, he had two financial failures at the Lyceum, his invaluable collection of scenery was destroyed by fire, and, ere the winter arrived, he was stricken with such a severe illness that, for several days, he lay at death's door. Before he reached the age of sixty-one, he found himself, by the force of cruel circumstances, bereft of his beloved theatre. So low, indeed, was his estate, that he was forced to sell his library. Yet his fortitude never deserted him, his confidence in himself was never greater, his iron will less daunted. At an age when most men of position can look forward to a little peace and comfort in the sunset of life, he had to seek his worldly fortune afresh. The greatness of his nature enabled him to stand the test of all these severe trials. His true nobility and grandeur fortified him, so that he came unscathed through a succession of disasters which would have submerged a mind that was not of the keenest, a nature that was not of the strongest. After

fifteen months of constant trouble, in which he lost practically everything save his glorious name, the love of his friends, and the affection of the public, he emerged triumphant. He produced, with brilliant success, a play which had been specially written for him, he paid a brief but prosperous visit to the provinces, and his sixth tour of America, ending in May, 1900, brought him hosts of new admirers and a net profit in money of nearly twenty-five thousand pounds.

Such is the moral of the trials and tribulations which came to Henry Irving at the age of sixty—the power to subdue self, to all outward seeming, the power to rise superior to every obstacle, the power to march steadily towards the desired end. It would be easy to make a pathetic tale of Irving's sufferings at this particular period, to harrow the feelings of the multitude, to make even the enemies of the dead actor amazed and sorrowful. Such is not my intention. Irving despised weakness, and he could not tolerate commiseration. He was proud of overcoming his misfortunes, and, for that reason, it is unnecessary to dwell upon them. It is sufficient to state that "Peter the Great," with which he re-opened the Lyceum on the first day of the New Year, 1898, had but thirty-eight representations. It was written by his son, Laurence, and was a worthy work, especially for so young a writer. Its great fault was its seriousness, its utter lack of comedy. Irving, as the turbulent emperor, could not make a sympathetic impression, although he had one or two moments of fine pathos. Nor could Miss Terry, as Catherine, distinguish herself. The gloom of the play was over-powering and not to the public taste. "The Story of Waterloo" and "The Bells," and another bill of unfailing popularity, "The Merchant of Venice," gave Irving time for the preparations necessary for "The Medicine Man," a modern melodrama, written by two literary men of note, the late H. D. Traill and Mr. Robert Hichens. This was brought out on 4th May, but it was not an acceptable dramatic work for any theatre, and it was entirely out of place at the Lyceum. The ability and attraction of Irving and Miss Terry were powerless to save it from the oblivion to which it was consigned

after twenty-two performances. After the conclusion of "The Merchant of Venice" on the 1st of July—the 48th representation of Shakespeare's play that season—the Lyceum closed, and as events fell out, that was the last occasion on which Irving acted in the theatre, in sole control, as his own manager—in which position he had been for nearly twenty years.

In the meantime, early on the morning of Friday, 18th February, the great stock of scenery which had been accumulated by Irving at the Lyceum was destroyed by fire. The scenery was stored in two arches under the South Eastern Railway, Bear Lane, Southwark. Thus, at one fell swoop, were consumed the productions of "Olivia," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Becket," "Macbeth," "Charles the First," "Louis XI.," "King Arthur," "The Corsican Brothers," "Richard III.," "Cymbeline," "Henry VIII.," "King Lear," "Faust," "Ravenswood," "Othello," "The Lyons Mail," and some two dozen other pieces. Fortunately, the scenery for "The Bells" and "The Merchant of Venice" was at the Lyceum, or the position would have been still worse. As it was, the sum of £5980 which Irving ultimately received from the fire insurance companies was little compensation for property which it was impossible to replace. His production account for this season was—all things considered—out of proportion. It amounted to £4923 12s. 6d. Of this sum, £1118 was incurred for the unfortunate experiment of a play written by "literary men"—"The Medicine Man".

During this troublous time, there occurred one bright episode which has been lost sight of in other books about the actor. It would have been particularly interesting in any circumstances, but, when the many trials through which he was then passing are borne in mind, the graciousness of Irving's nature stands out with greater clearness. It is seldom, indeed, that the name of an actor is seen in the pages of the *Tablet*, so that the following advertisement in the issue of that old-established organ of Roman Catholicism of 14th May, 1898, is of unusual interest:—

Archbishop's House, Westminster, S.W.
May 17th, at 3 p.m. punctually,
His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan presiding,
SIR HENRY IRVING
will speak on the character of
Macbeth
in aid of the funds of
The Catholic Social Union.
Tickets £1 1s. each.
Application to be made to the Private Secretary,
Archbishop's House, S.W.

This event, a remarkable one in the life of an actor, originated in a proposition put before Irving on behalf of Cardinal Vaughan, who was the President of the Catholic Social Union. Mr. Austin Oates was the organising honorary secretary of the Union, as well as the Archbishop's private secretary. In his reminiscences of the affair, which he has been good enough to write for the purposes of this biography, he says: "The Cardinal, from the first, warmly welcomed the suggestion put forward by me that Sir Henry Irving should be approached with the view of enlisting his sympathy and services in the cause of the Catholic Social Union, a work started by his Eminence soon after his translation from the see of Salford to that of Westminster on the death of Cardinal Manning, in 1892. Furthermore, he was all in favour of the idea that the recital—should Sir Henry agree to give it—should take place at Archbishop's House; though to this proposal some (a very few) of the older clerical members of his entourage took exception on the ground that Archbishop's House was not the place for theatrical displays, no matter how exalted the eminence and high personal character of those asked to take part in it, or how worthy the object for which their great histrionic gifts and talents were to be bespoken." The shade of Cardinal Manning was still hovering over Westminster, but Cardinal Vaughan, who was inclined to more liberal views than his predecessor, soon convinced the very few opponents of the

idea that he was in the right. Accordingly, Mr. Oates "broached the matter by letter on the Cardinal's behalf to Sir Henry Irving and asked for an interview. It was granted at once in a note in which he expressed himself as being delighted to do anything in his power to be of service to the Cardinal and the cause he had at heart. With the cause itself—when explained to him by me—he evinced the greatest sympathy and interest.[1] He heard how the Cardinal had enlisted the zealous, whole-souled sympathy, support and personal service of many ladies and gentlemen of position and influence; of the founding of Ladies' Settlements to further and foster the work by the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle, the late Lady Margaret Howard (sister of the Duke of Norfolk), the Lady Edmund Talbot, and others. It is no exaggeration to say that Sir Henry Irving's heart went out to the work and its workers. To help it forward, he was willing to do more than was asked of him. He suggested the rendering of 'The Story of Waterloo' and a scene from 'The Merchant of Venice,' and offered to pay an early visit to Archbishop's House, to see over the reception rooms and their possible adaptation to stage purposes.

"Palm Sunday was, if I remember well, the day fixed by Sir Henry Irving to see over Archbishop's House with the view of deciding which room would best suit the purpose in contemplation. I showed him over the whole house, the chapel, the Cardinal's private study, the secretaries' office, the library, reception, and throne rooms. The latter, a large and well-proportioned apartment, appealed at once to Sir Henry as the best suited, and he suggested that it should be used. The Cardinal, who had been pontifically assisting at

[1] The aims and the objects of the Catholic Social Union were to enlist the personal sympathy and service of the cultured, leisured, and well-to-do class on behalf of their less happily circumstanced brethren—particularly the younger people—to open recreative and instructive clubs and classes for them, to make them in every sense attractive by concerts, plays, games, dancing, boxing, musical drill, etc., etc.; above all to take a real, personal interest in each and all, and to spare no personal effort or expense to bring a few rays of sunshine into their lives.

high mass at the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, now entered the hall in his cappa magna. Sir Henry Irving followed his movements closely as he came up the central stairway, remarking to me how stately he looked in his robes, the colour of which however, being violet—puzzled him. 'I thought,' he said to me, 'Cardinals always wore scarlet when officiating or pontificating.' 'Not during Lent,' was my answer. I introduced him to the Cardinal, who greeted Sir Henry most warmly and thanked him for his great kindness, and cordially invited him to lunch with him and his household. This Sir Henry could not do as he was already engaged. In the course of further conversation, the programme as eventually carried out was decided upon, Sir Henry graciously offering to send his own men to erect the platform, reading desk, etc.

"Needless to say the throne room was packed, and additional chairs were placed and occupied in the adjoining reception room. A large number of the audience were priests, who thus availed themselves of the unique opportunity of hearing the greatest actor of their day. Sir Henry's rendering of 'The Dream of Eugene Aram' was to many of them a revelation of dramatic power and possibilities. I heard the Cardinal say to Sir Henry when thanking and taking leave of him after the recital, that he could not conceive that any man, however provoked, could possibly bring himself to perpetrate, in hot blood or cold, a murder, after hearing Sir Henry Irving's awesome and agonising rendering of Hood's poem.

"The Cardinal noticed with much concern that Sir Henry was in a profuse bath of perspiration from the strain undergone upon mind and body, and himself showed him to the dressing-room set aside for Sir Henry. Before they parted, the Cardinal gave him a large photograph of himself, with his autograph."

The lecture on "Macbeth" which was given by Irving on this memorable occasion was an amplification and revision of one that he had delivered before the Literary Society of the Owen's College, Manchester, in December, 1894. As it introduced many passages from the play, the clerical portion of

the audience had, for the only time in their lives, the opportunity of hearing an actor utter the words of Shakespeare. The player was received by the Cardinal Archbishop, and the company included Lord and Lady Denbigh, Lord and Lady Edmund Talbot, Lord Llandaff, Lady Sherborne, Admiral Lord Walter Kerr, Father Gerard, Provincial S.J., Colonel Vaughan, Mr. Reginald Vaughan, Mrs. Goschen, Mgr. Nugent, and many other well-known Catholics. Much applause attended the conclusion of the lecture. The recitation of "The Dream of Eugene Aram," which aroused profound interest, was followed by a pretty incident, one which touched the actor's heart: two young girls from the settlement of the Social Union at Tower Hill offered an address, which expressed the thanks of the children to him for the generous manner in which he had come forward to aid them.

Cardinal Vaughan then proceeded to thank the actor for his services. They all had, he said, to express their hearty and grateful thanks to Sir Henry for the manner in which he had entertained them. It would require some person far differently situated from himself, far better educated than he was, some expert on the dramatic art, to do justice to the theme which was suggested by Sir Henry Irving's presence there that day. It was not for him to pass criticism or encomiums on one who was facile princeps in the elevated art which he had made the profession of his life. He could only express their deep sense of gratitude for the assistance Sir Henry had rendered them in forwarding a cause which he (the Cardinal) for one had very near indeed to his heart—that which was dear to every pastor, the duty of watching over and preserving the innocence of the children whom they were educating in their schools. Many of these children had to leave school very early—at twelve or thirteen, or even before—in order to earn something in aid of the scanty family income. They were thus thrown into the vortex of London, and exposed to every kind of injurious influence, and strong must they be to resist the torrent into which they were cast. He moved a cordial vote of thanks to Sir Henry Irving for his lecture and

recitation. The motion was seconded by the Earl of Denbigh and carried with enthusiastic applause. Henry Irving, in reply, said he had to thank his Eminence for his very sweet and gracious words, and for having given him the opportunity of being present. It had been a great delight to him to come, and he should be only too glad if he had been instrumental in assisting forward so admirable an object. Thus terminated one of the most noteworthy incidents in the life of the great actor. During this month of May he did two other kind deeds. On the 12th, he recited "The Uncle" at the Alhambra Theatre of Varieties for the benefit of M. Jacobi—who had composed the music of his revival of "The Dead Heart"—and at Her Majesty's Theatre, on the 24th, he acted Corporal Brewster on behalf of the Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund.

Another honour which came to him in this year and helped to compensate him for much of his distress in connection with the theatre was the conferring upon him by the University of Cambridge of the degree of Doctor of Letters. He received the degree on 16th June, on which date he delivered the Rede Lecture in the Senate House of the University. This lectureship was founded in 1524, by Sir Robert Rede, Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas in the reign of Henry VIII. The lecturer is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, and Irving's predecessors included Ruskin, Huxley, Matthew Arnold, and Max Müller. He was, it need hardly be said, the first actor to receive such an honour. He wore the robes of Doctor of Letters of Dublin University on this occasion. His discourse was entitled, "The Theatre in its relation to the State," and his humorous references to the ancient enactments in regard to players caused much amusement. He spoke for three-quarters of an hour, and, at the end, he was rewarded with a hurricane of cheers. The cheers continued as he was leaving the Senate House in the company of the Vice-Chancellor, and, as they increased in volume, he stopped and bowed his acknowledgments once more. In the procession was Mr. W. B. Redfern, to whose enterprise Cambridge theatricals owe so much, and, in re-

sponse to his congratulations, Irving replied: "This has been a great day for our profession"—he never accepted an honour for himself alone. Later on, the degree of Doctor of Letters of Cambridge University was formally conferred upon him, the Public Orator, Dr. Sandys, declaring, in a highly laudatory speech, that even the Academic School had learned from him some few lessons on the duties of the State. They knew that, above all, he had been true to the memory of Shakespeare, and that he had not only preserved the reputation of the stage untarnished, but had even enhanced its fame. He could now look back on two and forty years spent before the public gaze; and if, like the Emperor Augustus after more than forty years of Empire, he were now to ask his audience whether he had played the drama of life without discredit, he would doubtless receive the immediate response of their approval and their applause.

Beginning on the 4th of July, Irving played for one week each at New Cross, Islington, and Croydon. But the experiment was poorly rewarded by the small profit of £122. On 25th July, he laid the commemoration stone of the Princess of Wales' Theatre, Kennington. He spent his holiday this year in Cromer. Writing to me on 11th August, he said: "This is a delightful place, and I'm really enjoying the rest"—a rest, by the way, which he needed. It was not for long, however. On 5th September, he began a suburban and provincial tour at Stratford (E.). Visits to Stoke Newington, Bristol, Birmingham, and Edinburgh followed. On the Sunday after the conclusion of the engagement in the northern city, Irving, while out walking with Lord Rosebery at Dalmeny, got his feet wet. His luggage had preceded him to Glasgow, and, as it was impossible for him to effect a change, he was obliged to journey back to Edinburgh, and thence to Glasgow, in a condition which laid the foundation for a most serious illness. He managed to act Mathias on the Monday night, but on the Tuesday, 11th October, was compelled to take to his bed. Pleurisy set in, and only the most careful of medical attention and the most skilled of nursing—helped, of course,

by his sound constitution, hitherto unimpaired—enabled him to recover. He often spoke to me, and in terms of unfailing gratitude, of the skill and attention of the trained nurses who watched him during this long and dangerous illness. On the evening of 27th October, I received from him the following telegram :—

"Doctor states rapidly improving. Out of bed yesterday first time and again to-day.

"HENRY IRVING."

On the next morning, there came another telegram from him to me, saying, "Still progressing. Had very good night." On the 29th, the message from him ran, "Still progressing, slowly but surely." Hardly a day passed from then until towards the end of November without my receiving, either from Irving or from his faithful valet, Walter Collinson, a message in regard to the recovery of my friend. Of these many telegrams, one, on 12th November, read : "Sir Henry's love, and still going on well and improving.—Walter." The daily bulletin for the next week was equally re-assuring, and on the 19th, there came this message : "Dear Brereton,—Come on Tuesday ; shall be glad ; let me know what train. All good wishes. Irving, Windsor Hotel, Glasgow." At last! The doctors, with good discretion, would not allow their patient to be seen by any one but themselves and the attendants until they felt that he was entirely out of danger. His old friend and stage manager, Mr. Loveday, his business manager, Mr. Stoker, Miss Ellen Terry—in fact, all his associates in the theatre were away, carrying on the tour as best they could.[1] It was with a joyful heart that I set out from London on 22nd of November, and never shall I forget our meeting on that night. But these intimate details and all that passed between us during the next five days may not have a place save in my memory.

It is enough to say that one result of my visit to Henry

[1] Mr. Norman Forbes appeared as Shylock to the Portia of Miss Ellen Terry and Mr. Fuller Mellish played Napoleon to her Madame Sans-Gêne. As was inevitable in the circumstances, there was a drop in the receipts and a loss on the tour.

Irving in Glasgow was that, soon afterwards, he was speeding south, first of all to Grafton Street—as he was obliged to break his journey in London in order to transact some necessary business—and then to Bournemouth. Here he stayed for several weeks, at the Royal Bath Hotel, passed Christmas and the New Year there, and completed his convalescence at another favourite resort of his, the Cliftonville Hotel, at Margate. The Lyceum Theatre came into the possession of a company under terms, as will be seen hereafter, which were not to the advantage of the man who, for so many years, had, alone and unaided, controlled its destinies. One of the most regrettable consequences of his illness and the change in his plans was the abandonment of "Richard II.," the designs for which, by Mr. E. A. Abbey, were all prepared. His illness also necessitated the giving up of his chambers in Grafton Street, as his doctor thought them too depressing. Hence his removal to Stratton Street, where he had an airy flat which got its share of the sunlight.

During his illness and convalescence, he wrote two letters which I have the privilege of printing. The first was to Sam Johnson, with whom he had played when he went on the stage in 1856, and who for many years had been a member of his company :—

"The Windsor Hotel,
"Glasgow.

"Dear Johnson,

"Will you, as the oldest of my comrades, convey to one and all of our company my deep sense of the kindness shown in the letter written to me, and which has touched me much. The present disbandment has been our only break in more than twenty years, and I hope that when I may renew work again, I shall see old faces about me.

"With kindly good wishes to all,

"Yours sincerely,

"Henry Irving.

"30*th November*, 1898."

The second letter was in reply to one sent to him by Mr. Pinero who, having heard that he had a new production in view and knowing how weak he was, wrote to him offering to relieve him of the toil of rehearsing. "If," says Mr. Pinero, "he had only stuck to his resolve, 'to realise and not to speculate,' how much happier things might have turned out!"

"THE BATH HOTEL,
"BOURNEMOUTH.

"MY DEAR PINERO,

"How good you are and how truly kind is your suggestion.

"Such a help as yours would under some conditions be of inestimable value—but my present intention is to produce no more new work at the Lyceum—certainly not for some time—but to travel—to realise and not to speculate.

"This with health and strength I can easily do.

"I am quite well again, but have promised not to work for some little time—and to get all the rest and sunshine I can.

"The rest is a bore—but the sunshine here is beautiful and has been, for the last two days, intense.

"If you should ever be drifting this way what a delight it would be to see you—but I know how busy you are—at least I have Hare's authority for that statement.

"But I should much like to see you, and, if not before, when I get to town again, we must get together.

"Indeed, old fellow, believe me, my heart is full of your kindness. I feel it deeply, and with love

"Am Ever Yours,
"HENRY IRVING.

"20*th December*, 1898."

On 19th February, 1899, while he was at Margate, he received some news which was a great gratification to him, and he immediately acquainted me with the fact in the following telegram: "University of Glasgow propose conferring degree of Doctor of Laws—unprecedented honour to an actor—England, Ireland, Scotland; Cambridge, Dublin, Glasgow. Might

be cabled to America. Best wishes." This honour—which was formally conferred upon him on the 20th of July following—was some compensation for the sale, on the 21st and 22nd of February, of "a portion of the dramatic library of a gentleman, comprising rare dramatic works, lives of actors and actresses". The auction took place at Christie's, and the two days' sale realised £1269 9s. 6d.

The honour conferred upon the actor by the University of Glasgow was very gratifying to him, and it brought forth a special compliment from Professor Glaister who, in introducing the recipient of the degree, said: "His fidelity to the best traditions of the stage, and his exclusion from his repertory of all that is vulgar or prurient, have been universally recognised as influences which elevate and purify dramatic art, and which have made the theatre a powerful agent in promoting the general taste and culture of the people. His consummate stage management, his constant interest in the cause of charity and in the progress of education, his high character, his writings upon, and his supremacy in, his own profession have been already acknowledged by many marks of royal, academic, and popular favour. Knighted by her gracious Majesty and having already had conferred upon him honorary degrees by the Universities of Cambridge and Trinity College, Dublin, this university desires that you will confer upon him in this degree its mark of appreciation of his valuable services."

At a luncheon given by the Senate, the Very Rev. Principal Story, who presided, proposed the toast in honour of the recipients of the degrees. "I find it difficult," said Irving, in his reply, "to express my very deep sense of the signal honour which the University of Glasgow has conferred upon me to-day. It is all the more gratifying because my associations with Glasgow are of very old standing. I am carried back nearly forty years to the theatre in Dunlop Street, where I played under Edmund Glover. An ambitious lad I was then—most young players have their heads in the clouds—but upon no cloud did my aspiring eye ever,

in its finest frenzy, perceive the Senate of Glasgow University sitting for the purpose of crowning my career with academic honours. Had such a vision been vouchsafed to me I should have felt that my opportunity of scholarship in early life made a university degree an ironical chimera. I should have felt that if this impossible thing did happen, a native lack of eloquence would make my gratitude rather a sorry kind of show before the Senate on the cloud, and I should have wondered whether Othello's address to another Senate would be accepted as substitute. And then I should have sought comfort in the thought that after all an actor might be able to wear these robes without injustice to their picturesque gravity. Standing before you to-day, I am most keenly conscious of the honour you have done to the art which has had the faithful service of my life. It is possible that forty years ago a player would have had no chance of being chosen for such a distinction. This speculation is not intended as a slur upon the historical enlightenment of Scotland. In those days, the academic circle scarcely comprehended the stage even further south. A mist of prejudice—not entirely a Scotch mist—rolled impartially to and fro over the Border. To-day's incidents, so far as they concern myself as a representative of the stage in your midst, are luminous with more liberal ideas; for this reason above all I am grateful to Principal Story for his eloquent acknowledgment that the drama and its interpreters have their share of the humanities which it is the aim of the highest culture to sustain." Irving travelled over-night from London to Glasgow, arriving in the latter city at 8 A.M. He left, on the same evening, on his return south, by the 10.45 P.M. train. He was accompanied on this arduous journey by Mr. Charles E. Howson, for many years his treasurer at the Lyceum.

The play which had been specially written for Irving during his convalescence was "Robespierre," by Victorien Sardou, the translation of which was made by Mr. Laurence Irving. The drama was a good theatrical work, and it presented several vivid pictures of the horrors of the Revolution. It

also contained some scenes of strong dramatic and pathetic interest. In one scene in particular, where Robespierre discovers that he has condemned his own son to the guillotine, Irving's acting was wonderfully pathetic. In another scene, where the ghosts of his victims appear to Robespierre, Irving's command of the weird and his power to thrill were made manifest. In the last act, the hall of the Convention, the splendid handling of a vast crowd was one of the most impressive scenes of the kind ever done even on the stage of the Lyceum. The drama, which was produced on 15th April, had a prosperous run until 29th July, the last night of the season, when the 93rd representation was given. Some traces of the illness of the previous winter were shown in the middle of May, when an affection of the throat compelled Irving to absent himself from the theatre, his part being taken by his son, Laurence, for several nights. A tour of five weeks embracing Birmingham, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Glasgow, Manchester, and Liverpool, began on 11th September and ended on 13th October. Two days later, accompanied by Miss Ellen Terry and the other members of his staff, he left England, sailing, for the first time from the Thames, at Tilbury. He travelled, on that occasion, by the *Marquette*, of the Atlantic-Transport company, and his remaining voyages across the Atlantic were made by this line. This was a much less expensive proceeding than travelling by the mail-boats, and, in addition, Irving appreciated the more homely fare and the steadiness of these ships.

Irving's sixth tour of the United States and Canada began in New York on 30th October, with "Robespierre." It lasted until 18th May, 1900. It was a hard-working tour, inasmuch as it included some thirty odd cities, and, consequently, the travelling was arduous. Yet Irving played on each night, and attended, as usual, a large number of social functions. In addition to "Robespierre," "The Merchant of Venice," "The Bells," "The Amber Heart," "Nance Oldfield," and "A Story of Waterloo," were given. Irving, Miss Terry, and the company sailed from New York on 19th May, by the *Meno-*

minee, arriving in London on the 28th. There was a profit on the five weeks' provincial tour, previous to the American engagement, of £2777 9s. 11d. This, added to the profits on the latter tour, £32,039. 11s. resulted in a credit of £34,811 0s. 11d. of which Irving had to give £10,464 12s. 5d. to the Lyceum Theatre Limited, leaving for himself £24,346 8s. 6d. As will be seen from the following statement, there was an average profit on each of the twenty-nine weeks of the tour of over eleven hundred pounds :—

	$	Cts.	£	s.	d.
Receipts	537,154	25	110,982	5	8
Expenses	382,082	78	78,942	14	8
Profit	155,071	47	32,039	11	0
Average receipts per week			3,826	19	5
Average profit	,,	,,	1,104	1	7

The tour was as follows: 30th October, 1899, to 18th November, New York; 20th November to 9th December, Boston; 11th to 23rd December, Philadelphia; 25th to 30th December, Washington; 1st to 6th January, 1900, Baltimore; 8th to 13th January, Brooklyn; 15th to 20th January, Pittsburg; 22nd January to 10th February, Cleveland, Detroit, Toledo, Columbus, Dayton, Indianapolis, Louisville, and St. Louis; 12th February to 3rd March, Chicago; 5th to 10th March, Toronto and Montreal; 12th to 24th March, New York; 26th March to 7th April, Providence, Springfield, Hartford, New Haven, Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo; 9th to 14th April, Cincinnati; 16th to 21st April, Kansas City, St. Joseph, and Omaha; 23rd to 28th April, Chicago; 30th April to 5th May, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Milwaukee, Philadelphia; 14th to 18th May, Harlem.

Such a tour would be trying for the youngest and strongest of a company, without any responsibility. It must have been an exhausting one for Irving, yet, as related above, he never missed a performance. Nor did his kindness of heart fail him when an American lady wrote to him on behalf of her daughter, who was about to essay the character of Malvolio

in a performance of "Twelfth Night" given by her college. He replied immediately, in his own hand :—

"CINCINNATI.

"DEAR MADAM,

"If to-morrow at one o'clock would be a convenient hour for you, I should be charmed to see you and your daughter, should you be able to call upon me here.

"Believe me,

"Very truly yours,

"HENRY IRVING.

"10*th April*, 1900."

And he devoted more than an hour of his time to giving the young lady, Miss Elizabeth Dexter, invaluable advice as to the impersonation of the character of Viola's love-sick steward ; and I recall with especial delight that on the day of his arrival in Washington, 25th December, 1899, he sent me a cablegram of good wishes for Christmas.

CHAPTER XVII.

June, 1900—March, 1903.

A dinner at the Savoy—Brief London season—A record benefit—Provincial Tours—"Coriolanus"—"Welcome Home" dinner at the Criterion—Irving and music—A humorous speech—Letters to Sir A. C. Mackenzie—Reads "Becket" at Winchester—Makes his will—Seventh American tour—Its great success—Gives the Trask lecture at Princeton University—"Shakespeare and Bacon"—"Faust" again in London—Farewell to the Lyceum for ever—The Lyceum shareholders and Irving's position—A brilliant night at the Lyceum—Irving breaks his holiday in order to attend the Coronation of Edward VII.—Autumn and spring tours.

THE return of Henry Irving from America in 1900 was celebrated by a dinner on Saturday, 9th June, at the Savoy Hotel, the more notable of the hundred guests assembling to do him honour including the Lord Chief Justice of England (Lord Russell of Killowen), the Earl of Chesterfield, the Earl of Donoughmore, the Earl of Kilmorey, the Earl of Craven, Sir Spencer Ponsonby-Fane, and the American Ambassador, the Hon. Joseph Choate. On the following Saturday, the 16th, the Lyceum re-opened with "Olivia". The season was an extremely short one. "Olivia" was followed by "Waterloo" and "The Bells," "Nance Oldfield" and "The Lyons Mail," and, on the last night, 28th July, the programme consisted of the third act of "Robespierre," "Nance Oldfield," "Waterloo," and the trial scene from "The Merchant of Venice".

Later on, while he was resting—at Crowborough, Sussex—a hurricane which caused great devastation to the town of Galveston, Texas, enabled him to do a signal act of kindness. It only needed the bare suggestion from a man who was well-known in his day, the late "Colonel" Tom Ochiltree, and

Irving instantly adopted the idea of a benefit for the sufferers. He telegraphed for me, and, in the course of an after-dinner chat, the plans were made. Mr. Arthur Collins instantly put Drury Lane Theatre at Irving's disposal, and all the artists in London proffered their services. I did the preliminary work before Irving's return to town, and, when he arrived in Stratton Street from his holiday, all the details were in order. In all my association with him, nothing was more delightful, in its way, than this. The majority of benefit performances are made troublesome by committees, each member of which wants to have his own way. We dispensed with such a cumbersome thing, and, consequently, we had no trouble. There was only one possible loop-hole for anxiety, and Irving anticipated, and disposed of, it at the outset. "The great difficulty with these entertainments," he said to me at Crowborough, "is that no one wants to be either at the beginning or the end. They all want to be in the middle of the programme. Now we may as well settle that difficulty at once—'I will open the ball and I will close it!'" Accordingly, on the afternoon of 16th October, Irving began the performance by reciting "The Dream of Eugene Aram" and he had arranged to close it by playing Corporal Brewster. But two other actors, who were also sure of their public, showed their common sense, and the last item on the programme was a scene from "Still Waters Run Deep," played by Charles Wyndham and Mr. Lewis Waller, Irving, in "A Story of Waterloo," immediately preceding them. In two respects, the benefit constituted a record—it was organised and given within three weeks, and the working expenses were covered by sixty pounds, the sum of £1265 being sent to the Mayor of Galveston. Six days after the benefit, Irving began an autumn tour at Manchester, from which city he sent me a letter beginning "Closed, and triumphantly!" which was more than compensation for my own share in the affair, quite apart from the pleasure of the association.

The tour in question occupied nine weeks, and embraced Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle-on-

Tyne, Sheffield, Leeds, and Brighton, where it concluded on 22nd December, 1900. After a brief vacation, which was largely devoted to preparations for the revival of "Coriolanus," another tour began on 4th February, 1901, Belfast, Dublin, Liverpool, Cardiff, Bristol, Bradford, and Birmingham being visited for one week each, the tour concluding on 23rd March, thus allowing three weeks only for the final preparations of "Coriolanus".

Irving's thirteenth, and last, Shakespearean character at the Lyceum was Coriolanus. The revival took place on 15th April, 1901. It signalised his return to the theatre after an absence of nearly nine months. As readers of this book are aware, he had contemplated the production as far back as the year 1882 when he had employed Mr. (as he then was) Alma Tadema for the designing of the scenery and costumes. This artist was responsible for the designs in 1901, and the music for the revival was composed by Sir A. C. Mackenzie. Irving, in short, had not lost the art of stage-production, but his own personality was as unsuited for the part of Coriolanus as was that of Miss Ellen Terry to Volumnia. There were one or two admirable passages in Irving's impersonation. In the second act, for instance, the contempt which he infused into the line, "Well, mildly be it—mildly," was remarkable in its concentration. In the last act, the scene where Coriolanus is in disguise, outside Aufidius's house, was a fine example of the profound melancholy which was so marked a feature, when it was necessary, of Irving's acting. But he was not the Roman soldier of tradition any more than Miss Terry was the Roman matron. The handling of the stage-crowds was magnificent. "Coriolanus" is not the kind of play which could be expected to have a long run, and the thirty-six consecutive performances at the Lyceum, small by comparison with Irving's other Shakespearean revivals, constitute a record for the tragedy. As soon as "Coriolanus" was launched, a dinner was given, in celebration of Irving's return to the Lyceum, at the Criterion Restaurant. It took the form of a special compliment from the O. P. Club, and was called the

"'Welcome Home' dinner to Sir Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry". It took place on Sunday, 28th April, and was largely attended. "Robespierre," "Madame Sans-Gêne," "Waterloo" and "The Bells," "The Lyons Mail,"

CORIOLANUS.

Revived at the Lyceum, 15th April, 1901.

ROMANS:

Caius Marcius Coriolanus -	Henry Irving.
Titus Lartius - - -	Mr. Lugg.
Cominius - - - - -	Mr. Tyars.
Menenius Agrippa - - -	Mr. J. H. Barnes.
Sicinius Velutus - - -	Mr. James Hearn.
Junius Brutus - - - -	Mr. Laurence Irving.
Young Marcius - - -	Miss Queenie Tarvin.
A Senator - - - -	Mr. Tabb.
A Herald - - - - -	Mr. Nash.
An Ædile - - - - -	Mr. Mark Paton.
A Soldier - - - - -	Mr. Fisher.
1st Citizen - - - -	Mr. C. Dodsworth.
2nd Citizen - - - -	Mr. Clifford Bown.
3rd Citizen - - - -	Mr. Kenney.
4th Citizen - - - -	Mr. Reynolds.
Volumnia - - - - -	Miss Ellen Terry.
Virgilia - - - - -	Miss Mabel Hackney.
Valeria - - - - -	Miss Maud Milton.
Gentlewoman - - - -	Miss Edith Thompson.

VOLSCIANS:

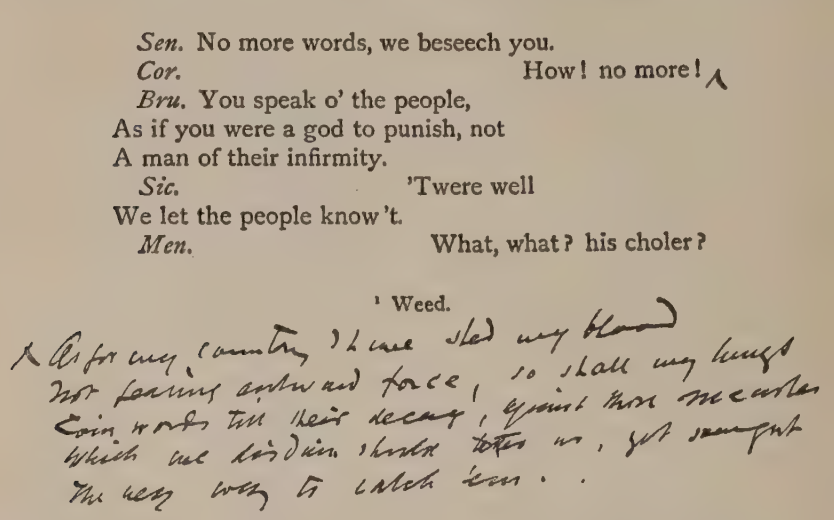
Tullus Aufidius - - -	Mr. W. E. Ashcroft.
Lieutenant to Aufidius - -	Mr. Marsden.
Volscian Lord - - - -	Mr. Buller.
Sentinel - - - - -	Mr. L. Belmore.
1st Servingman - - - -	Mr. J. Archer.
2nd Servingman - - -	Mr. Ablett.
A Citizen of Antium - -	Mr. Lambert.

Act I., Scene 1. Rome—the Forum; Scene 2. A Room in Marcius's House; Scene 3. Near Camp of Cominius; Scene 4. Rome—a Street; Scene 5. A Street—the Forum; Scene 6. A Street; Scene 7. The Capitol. Act II., Scene 1. Rome—the Forum; Scene 2. A Street; Scene 3. Room in Coriolanus's House; Scene 4. The Forum. Act III., Scene 1. Antium—before Aufidius's House; Scene 3. Rome—the Forum; Scene 4. A Camp near Rome; Scene 5. Rome—the Forum; Scene 6. Antium—a Public Place.

"Louis XI.," "The Merchant of Venice," and "Charles the First," were revived during the season, which was brought to a close on 20th July with the thirty-seventh performance of "Coriolanus".

Henry Irving's appreciation of music is brought to mind

in connection with "Coriolanus". On 25th July, in the year before that revival, 1900, he distributed the prizes to the students of the Royal Academy of Music, the Principal of which is Sir A. C. Mackenzie. It fell to the lot of Sir Benjamin Baker to propose a vote of thanks to the chairman, and in doing so he said: "To me, every appearance in public of Sir Henry Irving, at a public banquet or elsewhere, is invariably associated with the strains of 'For he's a jolly good fellow'. A few years ago, Sir Henry and I received


Sen. No more words, we beseech you.
Cor. How! no more!
Bru. You speak o' the people,
As if you were a god to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.
Sic. 'Twere well
We let the people know't.
Men. What, what? his choler?

' Weed.

FACSIMILE FROM IRVING'S OWN BOOK OF "CORIOLANUS" SHOWING HOW, EVEN AFTER THE TEXT HAD BEEN CAREFULLY REVISED BY HIM AND THEN PRINTED, HE MADE ALTERATIONS UNTIL HE GOT IT PERFECT.

honorary degrees together at the Dublin University. I heard outside in the quadrangle the familiar strains, 'For he's a jolly good fellow'. I went out and saw a struggling piece of humanity in a red cloak on the shoulders of a dozen undergraduates going about twelve miles an hour across the quadrangle. When the extreme limit was reached, Sir Henry—of course, it was he!—was shot down like a sack of coal, and there he stood, palpitating like a concertina, I may say, making a speech—and he actually thanked them for the cordiality with which they had received him!" The con-

clusion of Sir Benjamin Baker's speech was followed by loud cheers which had scarcely subsided before the students commenced vigorously to sing "For he's a jolly good fellow". Irving's reply was full of humour and another proof of that self-possession which never deserted him or allowed him to betray, in public, his innermost feelings: "The story which our friend, Sir Benjamin Baker, has just recorded rather caused a thrill of fear in me for a moment lest the young people here might take hold of me and run me down to the Lyceum. On an ordinary occasion, I should not object to that, but if in this hot weather they will omit doing so I shall be glad. I can only tell you, my friends, what a great pleasure it is to me to be here to-day, and certainly you have added a pleasure. I look upon it as a very great pleasure and privilege to have heard, as I have heard here, such sweet music so beautifully discoursed. My position here to distribute the prizes is, I am afraid, purely ornamental. I say 'ornamental,' for I do not suppose that my very old friend—I may say my dear and valued friend—Sir Alexander Mackenzie desires me to persuade you or himself that I have the least title to speak as an authority on music. Indeed, I have a suspicion as to the real design of Sir Alexander in inviting me here to-day. He knows that in the theatre music, however excellent, is treated as somewhat incidental, and he wants to take me out of that atmosphere and away from the tyranny of the drama, and introduce me to a place where the real fitness of things is properly observed, and where music, instead of being incidental, is all-sufficient and supreme—(cheers). This seems, perhaps, a suitable occasion for me to make a confession to you—that I have in my time taken dreadful liberties with music. In the course of a somewhat chequered career I have sometimes striven to deceive an audience into believing that I was playing the piano. I remember once executing a very charming melody on that instrument, it being not really produced by my accomplished fingers, but by a lady or gentleman (I do not know which at the moment—I think it was a lady) who was very carefully

concealed behind a door in the wings, and who played this tune on quite a different piano. The worst of it was that I was getting the idea that I was becoming rather fascinating, and I dare hardly tell you of the very many subterfuges I was put to when requested sometimes at some social gathering 'to play that charming air which you rendered so delightfully on the stage the other evening'. I have no doubt that after such a confession some of you may have conscientious scruples at having taken your prizes from such an impostor as myself; but, at any rate, to you, ladies and gentlemen, I have made a 'clean breast of it'. I thank you with all my heart for the manner in which you have received my confession and for the manner in which you have received me—(cheers). The drama owes a very great deal to music, and many plays at the Lyceum Theatre have been enhanced by the power of music, which I acknowledged, I think, during my management by securing the services of many of our gifted composers—among others those of my old friend, your Principal, Sir Alexander Mackenzie." Irving also alluded on this occasion to "Manfred," for which Sir Alexander Mackenzie had composed the music, at his request—he abandoned the revival, as there was no part in the play for Miss Terry. In this connection, he wrote to the composer as follows :—

"15A GRAFTON STREET.

"MY DEAR MACKENZIE,

"I am afraid that I cannot come round to-day—having an appointment at Kensington, which will keep me some little time.

"I have only just decided to begin my season with an original play—I have put off (for the present) our talked-of 'Manfred'. There are impediments in the casting of 'Manfred' (as my company now stands) which would almost make the production impossible.

"I am going for a provincial tour after all, and shall re-

open at the Lyceum in December. You will have a real holiday, I hope. I need one too.

"Every good wish,

"Sincerely yours,

"HENRY IRVING.

"*21st July*, 1897."

Sir Alexander also wrote the music for "Ravenswood" in 1890, and, as he informs me, on 15th July of that year, "I played my music to him in his room at the Lyceum, he sitting beside me at the little pianoforte, Mr. H. J. Loveday being the only other person present. As it happened, no alteration was ever made, which I take to be a somewhat unusual circumstance. When I had finished, Irving asked me what I meant to convey by the music to the final curtain. This music is the love-motif which runs through the play, given with all the strength of the orchestra. I told him that my idea was that Edgar and Lucy were joined in death, and not divided as in the case of Faust and Margaret; in fact, that I intended it to be an Apotheosis of love. After thinking for a moment or two, he said that he had imagined a cold and desolate moon-lit scene, with the black plume lying on the sands. He said no more then, but on the following morning I received this letter, which must have been written on the evening of our meeting. In any case, it proves that he did not hesitate to adopt the musician's idea, and the final scene became a brilliant sunrise.

'LYCEUM THEATRE.

'DEAR MACKENZIE,

'You were right after all. Faust does, we hope, get to Heaven in the second part—and Edgar and Lucy, I am sure, go together.

'At all events your music will certainly send them there—and the moonlight—on the sea—I shall change to the breaking of the rising sun.

'Sincerely yours,

'HENRY IRVING.

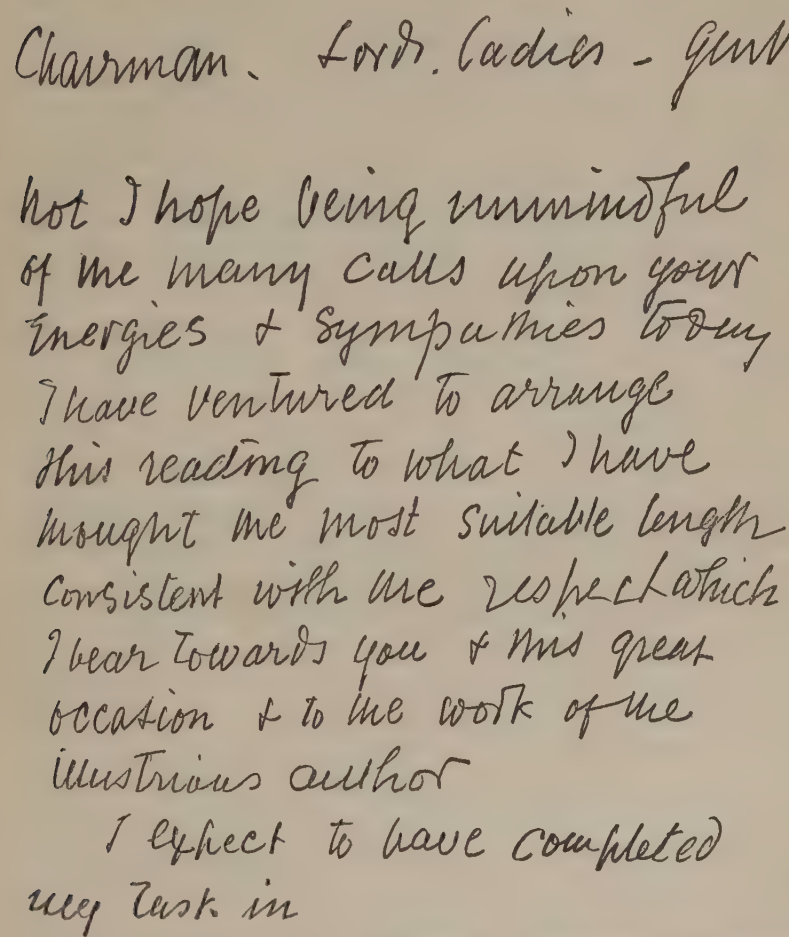
'*15th July*, 1890.'"

In addition to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the following composers wrote incidental music for plays produced by Henry Irving: Sir Julius Benedict, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Sir Charles Stanford, Hamilton Clarke, Mr. Meredith Ball, George Jacobi, and Mr. Edward German.

After a brief holiday spent at Colwyn Bay, Irving returned to London before the end of August, and, on 2nd September, began, at Manchester, a four weeks' tour. He also played in Glasgow, Leeds, and Birmingham. In September, he read scenes from "Becket" at the celebration of the tercentenary of King Alfred the Great at Winchester. The reading took place in the Castle, on 18th September. Apart from the reading itself, there were some points of interest. In the first place, it was a feat which was not accomplished easily. On the Tuesday night Irving acted in Leeds, travelled after the performance to London, and arrived in town apparently none the worse for his journey. He took luncheon with me at Waterloo, and when he left for Winchester he was in the best of spirits. His exertions there did not tire him, he slept at his rooms in Stratton Street the same night, and was up early the next morning, for, before nine o'clock, I received a letter from him asking if I could call for him at a quarter to ten and drive with him to King's Cross on his return to Leeds. He was in a happy frame of mind that morning, yet, as will be seen from the facsimile of his speech at Winchester, he intended to withdraw from the stage at no distant date. The care which he took in matters of detail is shown by the paragraph which he forwarded to me indicating the manner in which he wanted the Winchester reading announced in the press; "Among the representatives of learned societies invited to be present at Winchester to celebrate the national commemoration of King Alfred the Great, Sir Henry Irving has been appointed by the Royal Institution of Great Britain to be their representative, and, in response to an invitation from the Mayor of Winchester and the National Committee, Sir Henry will, on the afternoon of Wednesday, 18th September, the opening day of the com-

memoration, give a reading at Winchester from Lord Tennyson's 'Becket'".

Irving left Tilbury for New York on 5th October, by the *Minnehaha*. On the eve of sailing, he made his will.



Facsimile of Irving's Notes for his Speech at Winchester, 18th September, 1901. Taken from a Leaf in the Large-Type Copy of "Becket" which he Used on that Occasion, now in the Possession of J. H. Leigh, Esq.

The document is brief and simple. It consists of only seven hundred words, and is strictly confined to the disposition of his property. Irving's first thought in this respect was for his valet, Walter Collinson, to whom he bequeathed an

annuity of fifty pounds. The rest of his estate he left in three portions, two-thirds of which were to be divided in equal proportions between his sons, whom he appointed his executors. He made no mention of his plays, and beyond the division of his property, he made no bequests or requests whatever. His will is signed J. H. B. Irving and Henry Irving. He took the necessary steps to legalise the name of Irving—which had suggested itself to him as a stage-name through his admiration for the author of "The Sketch Book"—when his sons went to Oxford. The subsequent sale of his effects—costumes, relics, books, and pictures—on 14th, 15th, 16th, 18th, and 19th December, 1905, realised £18,790; the net result of his estate was £14,633.

The plays presented during the seventh American tour consisted of "The Merchant of Venice," "Charles the First," "Louis XI.," "Waterloo," "The Lyons Mail," "The Bells," "Nance Oldfield," and "Madame Sans-Gêne". The engagement opened in New York on 21st October in "Charles the First". There was a great demand for seats. Many persons camped out all night in order to get good seats when the box-office for the advance booking took place, and, long before daylight, the line extended for half a mile from the theatre. The receipts for the first day's booking amounted to nearly eight thousand dollars. Nor was the press behind-hand in appreciation. The *Tribune* said that the play was vitalised and exalted by the acting so that it became a glowing and tragic reflection of actual life. The *Times* remarked that the potency of the acting was felt by all the auditors, and the *World* said of the acting that it was the best that the English stage afforded. The tour was thoroughly successful, and, as usual, it meant much work for Irving, apart from that of the theatre. At Buffalo, for instance, during his three days' stay, he was entertained at luncheon by three hundred and fifty leading citizens and delivered an address on "Actors and Acting".

This tour was extremely successful. It lasted twenty-nine weeks, the average receipts being £3,826 19s. 5d., and the average weekly profit £799 12s. There was a total

profit on the tour of £17,592 2s. 7d., of which sum £4,398 went to the Lyceum syndicate. As usual the expenses were heavy—£55,227 16s. This was Miss Ellen Terry's last tour in America with her old manager and comrade. In fairness to Irving, it should be stated that Miss Terry's remuneration was a handsome one—at this period, she was paid at the rate of £100 per week in London, £200 per week in the provinces, and £300 per week in America. The seventh American tour was as follows: 21st October, to 9th November, 1901, New York; 11th to 16th November, Brooklyn; 18th to 30th November, Philadelphia; 2nd to 21st December, Chicago; 23rd December to 15th February, 1902, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Columbus, Toledo, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Springfield; 17th February to 8th March, Boston; 10th to 15th March, Providence, Hartford, New Haven; 17th to 21st March, Harlem.

During the last week of this tour, Irving gave a convincing proof that his intellectual faculties and his physical energy were undaunted. On the morning of Wednesday, 19th March, he travelled from New York to Princeton, New Jersey, where he delivered the Trask lecture in the Alexander Hall. The lecture, it may be noted, is given at the invitation of the Princeton University, and the office is confined to distinguished persons. "The university students and professors," said a contemporary account, "were out in force and the two o'clock recitations in the Theological Seminary were suspended to let the students hear the celebrated actor's lecture on 'Shakespeare and Bacon'. The big hall was filled to overflowing when Sir Henry was driven up to the building in the carriage of Mrs. Laurence Hutton, at whose home he had been entertained at luncheon. The appearance of Sir Henry on the platform, clad in his scarlet robe, brought forth a storm of applause. President Patton spoke briefly, saying that the lecturer needed no introduction to any American audience. The lecture was listened to throughout with close attention, and at its end the students gave the 'locomotive'

cheer. Sir Henry accepted honorary membership in the Cliosophic Literary Society, but, being pressed for time to get his train for New York, was unable to go through the formal initiation ceremonies. Among those present were Mrs. Patton, Mrs. Laurence Hutton, Mr. and Mrs. George Armour, Professor and Mrs. John H. Finley, Professor and Mrs. George M. Harper, Professor and Mrs. A. T. Ormond, Professor and Mrs. J. Mark Baldwin, Professor and Mrs. John G. Hibben, Professor and Mrs. Henry B. Fine, and Professors W. Brenton Green, Casper W. Hodge, and Henry W. Smith, of the Theological Seminary." This lecture was subsequently published in England. The accompanying copy of the first part of Irving's proof, shows how careful he was to insist upon Shakespeare as a player and playwright.

SHAKESPEARE AND BACON.

It has occurred to me that the opinion of a [illegible] may have some interest in the controversy which seems to make a perennial appeal to the curiosity of the public. I am encouraged to express this opinion by Judge Allen, of Boston, who at the end of his able treatise on "The Bacon-Shakespeare Question" does me the honour of summing up the debate in some words of my own. "When the Baconians can show that Ben Jonson was either a fool or a knave, or that the whole world of players and playwrights at that time was in a conspiracy to palm off on the ages the most astounding cheat in history they will be worthy of serious attention."

Irving's next season in England began on 26th April, 1902, at the Lyceum, with "Faust". As Miss Ellen Terry, who had accompanied her old manager and comrade on his previous American tour, had withdrawn from the company, the character of Margaret was now taken by Miss Cecilia Loftus. This, of course, was not the first time that another actress had played Margaret in the Lyceum "Faust"—as already stated, Miss Winifred Emery had done so on several occasions. The "Faust" revival of 1902 filled the Lyceum

until the middle of June. During the remaining weeks, "Charles the First," "The Merchant of Venice," "Louis XI.," "The Lyons Mail," and "Waterloo" and "The Bells," formed the programme, Miss Terry returning to the Lyceum in order to act Queen Henrietta Maria and Portia once again. There were sixty-eight performances of "Faust" during this season.

There is no occasion to enter into the details of the misfortunes which led to the closing of the Lyceum as a theatre

THE LAST PERFORMANCE AT THE LYCEUM,

Saturday afternoon, 19th July, 1902.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Shylock	Henry Irving.
Bassanio	Mr. Tyrone Power.
The Duke of Venice	Mr. R. P. Tabb.
Antonio	Mr. Laurence Irving.
The Prince of Morocco	Mr. F. Tyars.
Salanio	Mr. W. Lugg.
Salarino	Mr. Lionel Belmore.
Gratiano	Mr. H. B. Stanford.
Lorenzo	Mr. W. E. Ashcroft.
Tubal	Mr. J. Archer.
Launcelot Gobbo	Mr. C. Dodsworth.
Old Gobbo	Mr. T. Reynolds.
Gasler	Mr. W. Graham.
Leonardo	Mr. H. R. Cook.
Balthazar	Mr. W. Marion.
Stephano	Mr. W. Ablett.
Clerk of the Court	Mr. F. D. Daviss.
Jessica	Miss Mabel Hackney.
Nerissa	Miss Rosalind Ivan.
AND	
Portia	Miss Ellen Terry.
Stage Manager	Mr. H. J. Loveday.
Acting Manager	Mr. Bram Stoker.

and to its conversion into a music-hall which gave two performances a night at cheap prices. These occurrences must not be laid at Irving's door, for he was in no way whatever to blame for them or responsible in the slightest degree. The end of his association of thirty-one years with the Lyceum came on the afternoon of Saturday, 19th July, 1902. "The Merchant of Venice" was played, and, although there had been no formal announcement that this was the end of Irving's

long reign, the news was an open secret. So that to many of the spectators, as to those upon the stage, there was a feeling of sadness, a note of singular pathos in the closing scenes. Irving said but little in reply to the requests for a speech. A few words of thanks, an allusion to his projected production of "Dante," and "your ever grateful, loving servant" bade adieu to the theatre in which he had won so many triumphs.

It may be as well to step aside for once from the strict order of events, and to set down in this place the precise story of Irving's connection with the Lyceum as a limited liability company, into which it had been formed after his illness of 1898-99. On 23rd April, 1903, the theatre was put up for auction. The property was withdrawn, as no bid sufficiently high was made, and, after the theatre had remained closed since 19th July, in the previous year, a meeting of the shareholders was held on 30th September, 1903, when it was decided to convert the property into a music-hall. Henry Irving could not be present, as he was fulfilling an engagement in Manchester. He was represented by Mr. Bram Stoker, who read the following letter from his chief:—

"As you will be at the Lyceum meeting to-morrow, will you please, if permissible, read this letter to the shareholders? It seems to me that it would be a great pity to have the Lyceum diverted from its purpose as a theatre, and I have grave doubts as to the success of such a scheme. Holding the views which I do regarding the possible good influence of a theatre on the community, I could not honestly acquiesce in such a proposal as that set forth, and under ordinary circumstances should have voted against it, being willing rather to sacrifice my own holding in the company, which is to me no inconsiderable loss. If, however, the great bulk of shareholders are wishful to make such a change, and think it to their own interest to do so, I am willing, in deference to their wishes, simply to abstain from any participation in the movement, and content myself with this expression of opinion. If an alternative scheme should be proposed to hold over the property (which will increase yearly in value) until a purchaser could

be found, I should be prepared to pay any share or proportion —say, for two or three years—of any sum which might be required to meet the expenses of debenture interest, sinking fund, and other necessary matters."

Continuing, Mr. Stoker remarked that Sir Henry Irving had been referred to by one of the shareholders in a manner that he considered unfair. He was sure that the gentleman had spoken in ignorance of Sir Henry's position with regard to the company, with the promotion of which he had no more to do than any other shareholder. The company approached him and asked him to sell his property, offering him terms which seemed to be fair—£39,000. This was to include his lease, which then had about twenty years to run, and for which he had been offered £10,000; and there were fittings in the theatre, which were put down at a valuation of £15,000. Sir Henry had also to give for five years one-fourth of his profits made outside the theatre. In payment of the £39,000 he took £26,500 in cash and £12,500 in shares. Therefore £26,500 was the real amount he received, for the shareholders knew what the shares were worth. During the three years in which his contract existed in vital force Sir Henry paid back to the company, from earnings on his account at the Lyceum Theatre, and absolute direct payments made from his earnings, £25,800. He (the speaker) thought that this was a very handsome return. Moreover, Sir Henry did not terminate the contract; he honourably carried it out as it stood. He simply had to leave the company because the latter were unable to fulfil their conditions of finding a theatre for him. He made arrangements for the production of one of Sardou's plays, and engaged a large company at an enormous expense, but by mutual agreement between him and the company this contract was amicably ended. Sir Henry Irving, concluded Mr. Stoker, throughout had acted as an upright, honourable gentleman to the company. It should also be stated that Irving's contributions to the production account during the period of his contract with the Lyceum syndicate amounted to £9,294 13s. 6d.—61·73 per cent. of the cost.

After all, however, there was much more of glory than of grief for Henry Irving in his brilliant years of acting at the Lyceum—a record quite untouched by any other actor and manager of the English stage—and it is fitting to refer to a great gathering which took place at the Lyceum on Thursday, 3rd July, 1902—sixteen days ere he left that stage for ever. On the evening of that date, after the performance of "Waterloo" and "The Bells," he gave a reception to the representatives of the Colonies and the Indian empire who had been invited to London in order to attend the coronation of King Edward VII. Shortly before midnight, said the *Daily Telegraph*, the distinguished visitors began to make "their entrance from Burleigh Street, either by Sir Henry Irving's own private door or by the scene-dock, which by some wonderful process, had been temporarily converted into a delightful vestibule. Heavy plush curtains had by similar means been arranged so as to conceal the walls of the stage itself, and so change, when the curtain had risen, the entire theatre into one vast reception room. Meanwhile, the orchestra had been spanned with incredible speed by two bridges, thus connecting the stage with the auditorium, while the footlights were concealed by a glowing bank of ferns, flowers, and plants. From the front of the amphitheatre gallery hung a massive crown composed of innumerable pieces of glass, illuminated by electricity and beneath this was a huge Union Jack designed upon a like plan. The dazzling effect of these two brilliant decorations may readily be imagined. Tables, groaning under a weight of tempting edibles, had been arranged at the extreme end of the pit, and thither visitors gravitated as occasion suggested. Sir Henry himself, standing R.U.C., to use the technical term, received his guests on the stage, and gave to each a hearty welcome to the old, historic house. Speedily the scene assumed a character of indescribable splendour, ladies in exquisite evening toilettes mingling with the Indian princes, conspicuous for their brilliant decorations; Colonial and home officers, resplendent in sumptuous uniforms; Colonial representatives and gentlemen in the more sombre attire of ordinary

evening dress, whose names, nevertheless, are familiar to every one as those of men famous in the domains of literature, art, science, music, or the drama. Each of these departments seemed, indeed, to have sent some of its most celebrated representatives." Among the eight hundred guests were: Lord Grenfell, the Right Hon. Sir West and Lady Ridgeway, Sir Walter and Lady Sendall, Sir William and Lady MacGregor, Sir Edmund and Lady Barton, the Right Hon. Richard and Mrs. Seddon, Sir Albert H. Hime and Miss Hime, Sir Robert Bond, his Highness the Sultan of Perak and Rajah Iskandar, the Maharaja of Gwalior, the Maharaja of Jaipur (Rajputana), the Maharaja of Kolhapur, the Maharaja of Idar, the Maharaja of Kuch Behar, Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, the Earl of Hardwicke, Sir Arthur and Lady Godley, Sir Horace and Lady Walpole, Sir John Forrest (Minster of Defence, Commonwealth of Australia), and Lady Forrest, Sir M. and Lady Ommanney, Sir Hubert and Lady Jerningham, the Hon. J. H. Choate (United States Ambassador), Mr. Henry White, Lord Justice Mathew, Sir G. Faudel-Phillips, Mr. Seymour Lucas, Dr. Robson Roose, the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, Sir W. J. Soulsby, Professor Malcolm McHardy, Mr. Labouchere, M.P., Mr. A. W. Pinero, Sir Charles Scotter, Lord George Hamilton, the Duchess of St. Albans, Sir Francis Burnand, Sir Francis and Lady Jeune, Sir L. Alma Tadema, R.A., Lord Glenesk, Earl and Countess of Aberdeen, Sir Henry M. Stanley, Sir Douglas Straight, and Sir James Blyth. It was five o'clock on the Friday morning ere the last of his visitors departed, yet the host remained smiling and imperturbable, apparently with no thought of his impending separation from the theatre wherein he had just played his part in princely fashion. For he had recently been playing another part on the mimic stage, one of the lines of which—"Be self-possessed, 'tis the whole art of living"—he put into practice in his own case. He never despaired, nor did he now. He spent his holiday in Cornwall, chiefly at Tintagel, in sight of King Arthur's castle. His well-earned rest was interrupted by a visit to

London, for he was bidden to Westminster Abbey to attend the coronation of His Majesty. After that event, he returned to Tintagel, and then spent ten days at Falmouth.

Miss Ellen Terry rejoined the company for the autumn tour of the provinces. Beginning at Birmingham on 22nd September, Irving went to Leeds, Nottingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, Dublin, Liverpool, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Bristol, where the tour ended on 13th December. On 22nd October, he was entertained for the last time by the Edinburgh Pen and Pencil Club. He had been the honoured guest of this club on seven previous and special occasions—17th November, 1881; 20th September, 1883; 1st September, 1887; 2nd October, 1888; 18th October, 1894; 17th June, 1896; and 14th November, 1900. In November, he was obliged, out of deference to the wishes of His Majesty, to make a journey which was another wonderful proof of his vitality. He had to travel from Belfast, where he was then in the course of a week's engagement, to Sandringham, act Corporal Brewster there, and return to Belfast within thirty hours. The King had arranged an entertainment in honour of the Kaiser, and it was the special wish of His Majesty that the matter should be kept private. Consequently, all the arrangements had to be made in confidence. Irving played Mephistopheles on the evening of 13th November, left Belfast immediately after the performance, and arrived at Liverpool at eight o'clock the next morning. He proceeded thence, via Crewe, Rugby, Peterborough, and Lynn, to Wolferton. Despite many difficulties, "Waterloo"—as Sir Conan Doyle's play was now called—was presented punctually at the appointed time, ten o'clock. At one o'clock on the next morning, Irving left Sandringham, travelled through the night to Liverpool, and at 6.45 A.M. embarked for Belfast, which was reached at five o'clock. Three hours afterwards, the impersonator of Mephistopheles was appearing before the Belfast public. Even with every possible comfort that could be managed—and the London and North Western Railway took the initiative in doing all that lay in their

power to facilitate matters—it was a terrific undertaking for a man, at the age of sixty-four, who was not in robust health. It meant, moreover, a heavy monetary loss. There was, however, a profit on the twelve weeks of over £4,000. From 29th January to 21st March, 1903, Irving was again on tour, and a hard-working one it was. He gave fifty-three performances, in the following places: Northampton, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Newport, Swansea, Southampton, Boscombe, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Halifax, Oldham, and Bolton.

CHAPTER XVIII.

April, 1903—October, 1905.

The production of "Dante"—Irving's strange belief in it—A supper in celebration—Visit of the King and Queen—Failure of "Dante" in America—Irving's last appearance in America—An eloquent tribute—Receipts for Irving's eight tours of the United States and Canada—A provincial tour—Farewell speeches in Bristol and Manchester—Irving projects a farewell tour of two years—Arranges for a season at Drury Lane—Letters to Mr. Arthur Collins—A wonderful demonstration—"Lead, Kindly Light"—Presentation of an address in Sunderland—Amusing reminiscences of Dundee—Farewell to Edinburgh and Glasgow—Entertained in Aberdeen—Luncheons in Liverpool—Gracious tribute to an old friend—Luncheon in Manchester—Christmas at Bournemouth—Dinner to old friends in January—Spring tour begins—Sudden illness at Wolverhampton—Recovery and recuperation—Kindly tribute to Joseph Knight—Last season at Drury Lane—Affection of the public—A wonderful demonstration—Some remarkable figures—His last appearance in London for the benefit of an old comrade—Sheffield, "a great sheaf of crimson roses"—More honours—Sudden death at Bradford—Burial in Westminster Abbey.

THE last chapter in the story of Henry Irving is of sadness culminating in glory. The sadness lies in the failure of one of his cherished projects, the glory in his proud bearing in the presence of defeat and his triumphant death. In order to keep before the public in England, it was necessary for him to pay another visit to America, for the monetary return in this country was not sufficient—even in the altered circumstances—for his heavy expenses. The fire of 1898 had deprived him of the bulk of his scenery and made it necessary for him to have new productions. His repertory was too limited for another tour of the United States, and no English dramatist could write a play to meet his requirements. He, therefore, had to apply to Victorien Sardou, a past master in the art of stage construction, who readily fell in with Irving's suggestion for a drama with "Dante" as the central figure.

DANTE.

First acted at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 30th April, 1903.

PERSONS IN THE PLAY:

Dante	Henry Irving.
Cardinal Colonna	Mr. William Mollison.
Nello della Pietra	Mr. Norman McKinnel.
Bernardino	Mr. Gerald Lawrence.
Giotto	Mr. H. B. Stanford.
Casella	Mr. James Hearn.
Forese	Mr. Vincent Sternroyd.
Bellacqua	Mr. G. Englethorpe.
Malatesta	Mr. Jerrold Robertshaw.
Corso	Mr. Charles Dodsworth.
Ostasio	Mr. Frank Tyars.
Ruggieri	Mr. William Lugg.
The Grand Inquisitor	Mr. William Farren, Junr.
Paolo	Mr. L. Race Dunrobin.
Ugolino	Mr. Mark Paton.
Lippo	Mr. John Archer.
Conrad	Mr. W. L. Ablett.
Enzio	Mr. F. D. Daviss.
Fadrico	Mr. H. Porter.
Merchant	Mr. R. P. Tabb.
Merchant	Mr. H. Gaston.
Townsman	Mr. T. Reynolds.
Townsman	Mr. A. Fisher.
A Servant	Mr. J. Ireland.
Pia dei Tolomei / Gemma	Miss Lena Ashwell.
Abbess	Miss Wallis.
Francesca da Rimini	Miss Lilian Eldée.
Helen of Swabia	Miss Laura Burt.
Sandra	Miss Ada Mellon.
Picarda	Miss E. Burnand.
Tessa	Miss Hilda Austin.
Marozia	Miss Mab Paul.
Cilia	Miss Ada Potter.
Lucrezia	Miss E. Lockett.
Julia	Miss Mary Foster.
Fidelia	Miss Dorothy Rowe.
Maria	Miss May Holland.
Nun	Miss Emmeline Carder.
Nun	Miss E. F. Davis.
Custodian	Miss Grace Hampton.
A Townswoman	Miss Mabel Rees.

SPIRITS:

The Spirit of Beatrice	Miss Nora Lancaster.
Virgil	Mr. Walter Reynolds.
Cain	Mr. F. Murray.
Charon	Mr. Leslie Palmer.
Cardinal Boccasini	Mr. M. Faydene.
Cardinal Orsini	Mr. J. Middleton.
Jacques Molay	Mr. W. J. Yeldham.

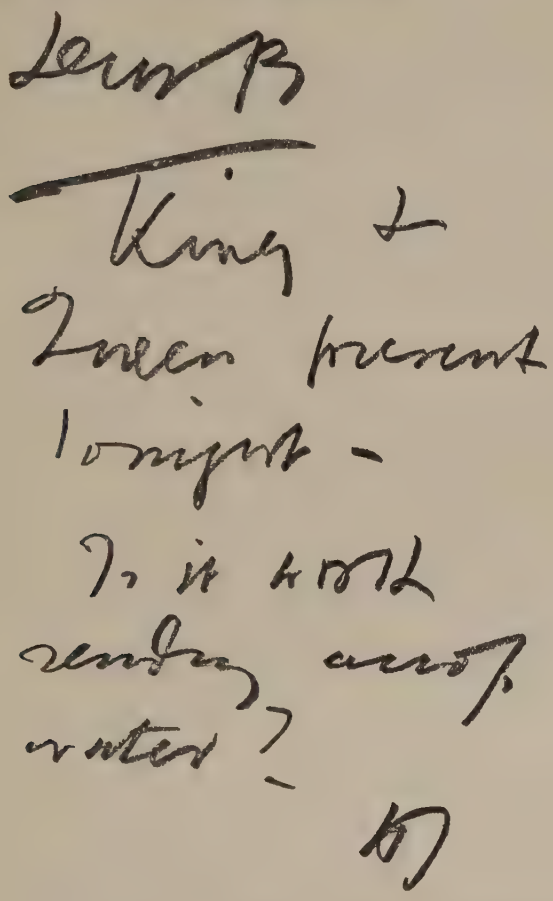
Prologue. The Tower of Hunger, Pisa. Act I., Scene 1. The Springtide Fête, Florence; Scene 2. Malatesta's House. Act II., Scene 1. The Death of Pia; Scene 2. The Convent of San Pietro. Act III., Scene 1. The Campo Santo, Florence; Scene II. The Door of Hell; Scene III. The Barque of Charon; Scene 4. The Fiery Graves; Scene 5. The Circle of Ice; Scene 6. The Bridge of Rocks; Scene 7. The Valley of Asphodels. Act IV. The Papal Palace, Avignon (1303-1314).

In due time, the veteran French playwright wrote his scenario —it was little more—and Irving, who had entrusted the negotiations and the translation of the work to his son, Laurence, produced the play. The drama, in a prologue and four acts, was brought out at Drury Lane Theatre on Saturday, 30th April. It was a poor, thin piece of journeyman work, unworthy of the distinguished dramatist who was chiefly responsible for it, and utterly unworthy of the pains and money bestowed upon it by Irving. The personality of the actor saved the play from being an absolute failure in London, and his picturesque figure will long be remembered by those who witnessed this impersonation. "Dante," indeed, gave ample evidence that Irving's powers, both as producer and player, were unimpaired at the age of sixty-five. His fame, and his great hold over the public, sufficed to attract good, but not overwhelming audiences to Drury Lane until the middle of July. It was hard for Irving to admit that he was beaten. And he would not admit it, even to himself. He had made up his mind that "Dante" would be successful, and he would not be convinced to the contrary. "You will be glad to know," he wrote to me shortly after the production, "that 'Dante' is *triumphant*"—he used this word frequently at this period of his life, and it shows what was passing in his mind. "Dante," however, was anything but a triumph in the commercial sense. Still, Irving was undaunted to the end. Early in July, he decided to give a farewell supper, and he entrusted to me the carrying out of the details. Accordingly, after the last representation of the play in London, Saturday, 18th July, about a hundred friends of the actor assembled at the Criterion restaurant and sat down to an exquisite supper which was intended as an indication of the success of "Dante"! The host was, as usual, the embodiment of courtesy, and, although it was not originally intended that there should be any speeches, Mr. W. Burdett-Coutts, M.P., could not refrain from proposing, in a few well-chosen, most graceful words, the health of Henry Irving. In every respect, the supper was a brilliant success. Its

Photo: Byron, New York.

DANTE.

key-note was prosperity and happiness. It is all the more gratifying that it was so absolutely harmonious, for it was the last gathering of the kind at which Irving was the host in London. "Admirable, most admirable. Everybody delighted—nothing could be better," was his own comment in a letter written to me shortly afterwards.



King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra at "Dante".

It is pleasant to think of Irving on such occasions as that of the brilliant function at the Lyceum before he left his old home for ever, and the "Dante" supper. They are thoroughly representative of the man. He never wore his

heart upon his sleeve. He never betrayed his distress, no matter how great it was. The eighty-two performances of "Dante" at Drury Lane brought him a good return, considering the fact that the piece was not popular, but the production cost him £12,835 8s., so that, on the season, there was no profit. But he looked to America to recoup him. The note, of which a facsimile is presented on the preceding page, was written in pencil, in his dressing-room, and delived to me by messenger, on Saturday evening, 6th June, and formed the gist of a cablegram despatched "across the water" that night to the New York *Herald*. After the performance of "Dante," His Majesty sent for Irving and had a chat with him in the ante-room of the Royal box.

He spent the summer vacation at Felixstowe and Buxton, and, on Saturday, 10th October, embarked on his eighth tour of the United States. A large party of press representatives assembled on board the *Minneapolis* at the invitation of the directors of the Atlantic Transport company, and many and sincere were the good wishes for the success of the actor, whose tour was announced as that of "Henry Irving and his company". In one of the many interviews which appeared immediately after his arrival in New York, he stated that the rehearsals of "Dante" at Drury Lane had occupied him, day and night, for five and a half weeks. In reply to another interviewer who, somewhat indiscreetly, asked him what he did for exercise, he promptly replied, "I *act*". The American production of "Dante" took place on 26th October, 1903, at the Broadway Theatre. One critic gave it as his opinion that the play had "enabled the foremost actor of our time to create an immortal image of intellectual supremacy, passionate devotion, heroic self-sacrifice, majesty, and power". The drama, however, failed to attract, and Irving was compelled to fall back upon a limited répertoire, for he had only yielded to advice at the last moment before quitting England, and, even then, had only brought the scenery for "The Merchant of Venice," "The Bells," "The Lyons Mail," "Waterloo," and "Louis XI.," in addition to that for

"Dante". The failure of "Dante" was a great blow to Irving, inasmuch as it proved that, for once, his judgment had been at fault, and, financially, of course, it meant that the theatrical treasury would suffer. But he still preserved his appearance of unruffled content. On 25th March, 1904, he played Louis XI. at the Harlem Opera House, with magnificent effect. This was his last appearance on the American stage.

In calling attention to that last performance, Mr. Winter remarked: "Henry Irving has done more for the stage than anybody else who ever appeared on it, and he richly merits his success. In Henry Irving the age has possessed not only a great representative of the dramatic art, in all its phases, but an illustrious example of noble character, splendid integrity of purpose, and whole-hearted devotion to the highest ideals. Henry Irving will make a royal adieu, and he will leave, in thousands of hearts, all over this land, a fragrant, gracious, and loving memory."

Irving's last tour in America was a most arduous one, as may be gathered from the following itinerary: 26th October to 14th November, 1903, New York; 16th to 28th November, Philadelphia; 30th November to 12th December, Boston; 14th to 19th December, Portland, Worcester, Waterhurst, Springfield, Hartford, New Haven (six towns in one week); 21st to 26th December, Brooklyn; 28th December to 2nd January, 1904, Washington; 4th to 9th January, Trenton, Scranton, Syracuse, Harrisburg, Ithaca, Rochester (again, six towns in the week); 11th to 16th January, Pittsburg; 18th January to 6th February, Buffalo, Albany, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Detroit (six towns in three weeks); 8th to 20th February, Chicago; 22nd to 27th February, St. Louis; 29th February to 5th March, Cincinnati; 7th to 12th March, Indianapolis, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo; 14th to 19th March, Cleveland; 21st to 25th March, Harlem.

The following is an account, in American and English money, of the total net receipts and expenses of Henry Irving's eight tours of the United States and Canada:—

	$	cts.	£	s.	d.
Receipts - - - - -	3,441,321	94	711,016	18	4
Expenses - - - - -	2,862,120	90	591,347	5	11
Profit - - - - -	579,201	4	119,669	12	5

Irving returned from his last journey to America in the first week in April. On Monday, the 18th of that month, he started, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, a spring tour of eight weeks. His principal attraction was "Becket". He also played Shylock, Louis XI., Mathias, and Corporal Brewster. The other dates were: 25th April, Edinburgh; 2nd May, Glasgow; 16th May, Dublin; 23rd May, Liverpool; 30th May, Manchester; 6th to 11th June, Bristol. In the latter city, on Friday, 10th June, he was tendered a public luncheon under the presidency of Mr. Goodenough Taylor, of the Bristol *Times and Mirror*. Part of the speech which he made on that occasion appears in the first chapter of this book. His concluding words were: "This is a memorable gathering for me—a gathering which adds another link to the chain of affectionate remembrances binding me to Bristol —your ancient and historic city—and I want to thank you very simply, but very gratefully, for this proof of a regard which I have prized most highly for many a year." His last speech in Bristol had a curious association in connection with his early days in that city. The handsome old chair in which he sat on that occasion was the one used by the Prince Consort at the launch of the *Great Britain* which he had witnessed when a boy. The chair is now in the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

One of the most interesting events of this tour occurred in connection with a reception given to him by the Manchester Arts Club on Wednesday evening, 1st June. At the end of a most entertaining speech, all of which need not be quoted, he alluded to his retirement from the stage. He began by a charming reference to his association with the city in which he had spent so much of his early life. "I have listened very often to your kindly greetings, but they come with a perpetual freshness. I can assure you it is a great comfort to a strolling

player like myself to know that he can always count upon an excellent meal and a kind word at the Arts Club. We have been at it a good many years—making these old associations it is such a pleasure to renew—and I daresay the younger members now and then occasionally wonder how old the strolling player who keeps on turning up—how old he can be! An actor's age, I am told, is always the subject of sympathetic interest. About twenty years ago, I remember, a lady wrote to me, and said: 'Is it true that you are getting on for eighty?' I replied, 'that it was quite true; but I hoped it would not make any difference'. The other day, I had a letter offering me a play—such things do come sometimes. The author said it was a poetical allegory, and he wanted to cast me in the part of Father Time. I wrote in what I thought was quite a playful spirit, to say that if I accepted the part I might want to use Father Time's scythe to cut down the other parts. He wrote back in quite a different spirit: 'How like an actor-manager!' Gentlemen, the strolling player who is now addressing you for, it may be, the hundredth occasion —I have quite lost count—may strike those younger members as rather like Father Time. But I can assure them that he carries nothing so unsociable as a scythe—only a cigar-cutter. As I look back upon these associations of ours, it seems to me there is not a subject relating to the welfare of the stage that we have not discussed together. Endowed theatres—dramatic schools—the dearth of plays—you know them all. The dearth of plays I scarcely dare to mention, because it provokes lively correspondence in the newspapers. Authors write to say that they have masterpieces in abundance, which the selfishness of actor-managers will not allow to see the light. But every manager is not an actor yearning for the middle of the stage. Mr. Charles Frohman is about as enterprising a manager as you will find; yet, strange to say, he doesn't want to act. But he searches the highways and byways of Britain and America, and I have never heard him complain that he has more masterpieces than he knows what to do with."

After a playful reference to endowed theatres, he made a humorous suggestion in regard to an imaginary "millionaire who writes plays," and then, growing serious, he said: "Perhaps he is listening to me now. Out of the fulness of his heart and pocket let him speak, so that the strolling player may pass away from the hospitable board. Oh, he'll come back, I hope, feeling that he has achieved a great work, and feeling more venerable than ever. Yes, venerable, perhaps, for it is forty-four years since I first came amongst you—forty-eight since I first set foot upon the stage; and it is at times borne in upon me, and never more than at moments like these, when life has so much that it is good to leave, that in another couple of years the time will have come when I must say farewell to the art which I have loved all my life. Fifty years of active work as a player is enough; and when I have completed the tale of those years I shall shortly make my last bow to the public, who have shown to me so much love and patience and sympathy; and I shall take with me as I go back from the glare of the footlights a memory which shall be a pride and pleasure to whatever period of rest may be my lot."

The endowed theatre was much in his thoughts at this time. Six weeks after his speech in Manchester, he talked about the subject during a few days that I spent with him at Sheringham, but he felt that unless a millionaire came forward, there would never be anything of the kind in this country. On leaving Norfolk, he went to Cornwall, and here he matured his plans for his farewell tour. He also stayed for a little while at Minehead, Somerset—his native county—and from there sent me the outline of his plans. He intended to make a farewell tour of two years, which was to embrace Great Britain and Ireland, Canada, and the United States of America.

The negotiations for what proved to be Irving's last season in London were opened during this summer holiday. Writing from King Arthur's Castle Hotel, Tintagel, on 26th July, to Mr. Arthur Collins, the managing director of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, he says:—

"All thanks for letter. Autumn 1905—shall be in America—but in spring, Easter Monday—from 24th April, should have five or six weeks—which we could talk over, should you be likely to have that time free."

Irving's second letter on the subject is dated from the Hôtel Métropole, Minehead :—

"DEAR ARTHUR COLLINS,

"All thanks for letter. I shall be delighted to appear at Drury Lane for five or six weeks from next Easter—more if possible—and I shall ask Bram Stoker to make an appointment one day next week to talk things over with you, should you be in town.

"In the meantime, anything you liked to say to your directors, would be endorsed by me, and I believe the engagement would be made very attractive and successful with a repertory programme.

"All good wishes,

"Sincerely yours,

"HENRY IRVING.

"*22nd August*, 1904."

In accordance with Irving's plan for taking leave of the stage, his farewell tour began, in 1904, and was as follows :—

Cardiff	Theatre Royal	19th to 24th Sept.	One week
Swansea	Grand	26th Sept. to 1st Oct.	One week
Birmingham	Prince of Wales'	3rd to 8th Oct.	One week
Leeds	Grand	10th to 15th Oct.	One week
Leicester	Opera House	17th to 19th Oct.	Three nights
Derby	Grand	20th to 22nd Oct.	Three nights
Middlesborough	Theatre Royal	24th to 26th Oct.	Three nights
Sunderland	Avenue	27th to 29th Oct.	Three nights
Dundee	His Majesty's	31st Oct. to 5th Nov.	One week
Edinburgh	Lyceum	7th to 12th Nov.	One week
Glasgow	King's	14th to 19th Nov.	One week
Aberdeen	His Majesty's	21st to 26th Nov.	One week
Liverpool	Royal Court	28th Nov. to 3rd Dec.	One week
Manchester	Theatre Royal	5th to 10th Dec.	One week

"Becket" was the chief play given, and "The Merchant of Venice," "The Lyons Mail," and "Waterloo" and "The Bells" were frequently acted. The tour was one continuous triumph—this description of it is in my mind now, just as it

was then in Irving's, and there is no exaggeration in the use of the word. The affection of the public for the player was evident in every town and on every occasion. On almost every night the actor had to make a short speech before the curtain, and many social and other honours were heaped upon him. One of the most remarkable demonstrations took place at the end of the second week, after the performance of "Waterloo" and "The Bells," the last night of Irving's engagement in Swansea. The applause at the fall of the curtain had hardly subsided when some one in the gallery began to sing "Lead, Kindly Light," and the hymn was immediately taken up by the whole audience. Some persons tried to stop this extraordinary demonstration, but Irving, stepping forward, expressed his delight, and, with deep emotion, said that scene would be for ever graven upon his memory. The incident, which has no parallel in the history of the stage, closed with the singing by the entire audience, all of whom rose to their feet, of "God be with you till we meet again".

The visit to Sunderland was the first that he had paid that town since his sojourn there which ended in February, 1857. His stay there in 1904 was a short, but extremely notable one. On the Thursday evening, and on the Saturday afternoon, he gave "The Merchant of Venice," he played "Becket" on Friday evening, and "Waterloo" and "The Bells" on Saturday night. On the Friday afternoon, 28th October, a large, representative gathering of the residents of Sunderland gave a luncheon in the Town Hall to the actor who, forty-eight years previously, had made his first essays on the professional stage in that town. The Mayor, who presided, made a presentation, which took the form of an address enclosed in a handsome casket. The following is the text of the address :—

To Sir Henry Irving, Kt., D.Litt. (Cambridge and Dublin), LL.D. (Glasgow).

Sir,—

On behalf of your numerous admirers and friends in the County Borough of Sunderland, we desire to offer you a warm and affectionate welcome to the town in which you commenced your career in the profession of which you are now the acknowledged head.

In all ages the Stage has been a potent force in moulding the convictions and shaping the aspirations of men—equally a means of instruction, amusement, and ethical purpose; and the personality of an actor who, to the skill of his special art, adds the feeling and inspiration of the artist, becomes a powerful influence for the advancement of culture. Still more is this true when the actor chooses to become the interpreter and exponent of the Shakespearean drama, the glory of our English literature.

We have learned with regret that the stage is soon to lose your active service, and that the present must be regarded as a farewell visit. Fifty years will soon have passed since first you stepped upon the boards of the Lyceum Theatre in Sunderland, and we recognise that after your strenuous labours you have a just claim to a period of repose and quiet enjoyment. To remind you of your association with our town we present you with this address and casket, on which are engraved scenes familiar to us all, with an expression of the hope that you may long be spared to wear the laurels you have so well earned, and to enjoy the esteem and admiration of your fellow-countrymen.

H. J. Turnbull, *Mayor,*
and Chairman of the Reception Committee.
J. G. Kirtley, *Treasurer;* Fras. M. Bowey, *Town Clerk.*
Charles Bevan and John Robinson, *Hon. Secs.*

Irving's reply contained some interesting reminiscences which have been referred to in the second chapter of his biography. At the conclusion of "The Bells" on the following night, there were the usual enthusiastic calls, and, in response, Irving made the following little speech, which may be taken as an example of the many others which he made, on similar occasions, during this farewell tour :—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is my privilege to thank you, and it is impossible to thank you adequately, for your welcome, and I am sure you will take the will for the deed.

"It has been a very great delight to be amongst you once again, and I would like to express my thanks to the many friends for their most gracious and sweet acts of courtesy since I have been in your town, and I would like to thank the gentlemen of the Press for their very generous record of our work, and I would like to thank you, and you, with thanks and thanks. I shall look forward with great pleasure, I hope, to meeting you once again. I hope that it may be my privilege, as it will be my happiness, to do so. (Applause.) You will not remember me as I shall remember you, but I hope

you will always remember me as your respectful, loyal, and loving servant."

After the performance of "Becket" in Dundee, on 1st November, a banquet, attended by one hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen, took place. In replying to the toast of his health, the guest of the evening made one of his most effective and characteristic speeches—half jocular, half reminiscent. "It is to me," he said, "a great pleasure to act in Dundee once again before I take my leave of the stage, and I cannot tell you how happy it makes me to be in the honourable position of guest of this brilliant gathering to-night. This hearty greeting of yours, and the most kind words to which I have just listened, are deeply gratifying to an actor who is not far from the end of his career. And I feel your good-fellowship all the more because it shows me how well I have retrieved my earliest misfortune—the misfortune of not being a Scot. (Laughter.) I did my best to repair the error of my parents and my pedigree by spending much of my apprenticeship in Scotland. It was a good school, gentlemen; full of discipline; no enervating luxury; no suppers after the play—well, none on this scale. You will recollect Sydney Smith's famous description of the early Edinburgh Reviewers cultivating literature on a little oatmeal. Well, I remember how I cultivated the drama here in Dundee on a very little marmalade.

"Man and boy, as the first Gravedigger would say, I remember it these six-and-forty years. Yes, I believe it was in the summer season of 1858 that the company of which I was a humble recruit came over from the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, with our repertory of plays, among which, of course, was 'Hamlet'. That reminds me—you see that one effect of your hospitality is to set me talking at large about very old times—that when I was playing 'Hamlet' in London thirty years ago, a famous old actor, Henry Compton, who really was a Scot, opened the evening bill with 'A Fish Out of Water'. 'Come and see me in "A Fish Out of Water,"' he used to say to his friends, 'and I think you had better

stop and see a young fellow named Irving in the after-piece.' Well, ''twas in the prime of summer-time' in '58, that we brought that after-piece from Edinburgh to Dundee. I should not say that summer was the best season for theatricals in your city. But what were we to do? There was a vacation in Edinburgh, and nobody had asked us to go yachting round Skye or salmon fishing in the Spey—a little oversight that happened sometimes. (Laughter.) So we decided to stick to business if we could get any. We formed ourselves in what they call a commonwealth. I don't know how that would work itself out, but on your principle it was that if you had £1 a week, you would take a percentage if the £1 did not come in. (Great laughter.) If more than £1 did come in of course you got more. Everybody took a percentage, and it generally resulted in this sort of thing, that if you had £1 a week you got 10s,

> Our prentice han'
> We tried on man—

and the man was Shakespeare. How it all comes back to me! I see that remarkable production of 'Hamlet' in Castle Street Theatre. It was not sumptuous.

"Those critics who tell you that when we produce Shakespeare nowadays we paint the lily and gild refined gold—they would have been pleased with the absolute simplicity of our scenery and accessories in that blessed summer time. When the king drank to Hamlet—I was the king—I was also the ghost, and several other useful persons—well, I drank to Hamlet out of one of Keiller's empty jars. I do really believe that the finest old family plate of Elsinore—the richly chased goblet—would have passed unnoticed. But when the playgoers of Dundee—there were not many of them for our summer season; but, if few, they were appreciative—I say when they saw that simple marmalade jar, which had done its duty in one of their own happy, unpretending homes—they rose at it with tumultuous joy. And when the First Gravedigger handed the skull of Yorick to Hamlet—a skull

which was visibly a small, attenuated, consumptive, and rather grimy turnip—then we knew that we had put our trust in the power of illusion, and not in vain!

"Well, gentlemen, a great deal has happened to me since then, and upon some of it your chairman has touched in his most flattering speech. I have had the good fortune—which is very strongly in my mind to-night—to make troops of friends on both sides of the border. Many of them are here. If I have lost any it is by the hand of death alone, and they, alas! are not a few in all the years that have passed since first I saw Dundee.

"But I am proud to know that, in the ups and downs of a life full of toil, I have won and kept your regard by the faithful, if imperfect, practice of a rare and difficult art. At least there has been a purpose steadfastly pursued, whatever the shortcomings of achievement—a purpose which has always aimed at the highest standard of the theatre. It is not a standard fixed in a groove. (Hear, hear.) If I may say so, there is some variety in the little bill I am submitting to you this week. The drama touches life at so many points that it can take a very wide compass indeed without forfeiting its mission of intelligent recreation. 'The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.' To be amused in a theatre—well, we all want to be amused in a theatre; but not to be amused by what is merely vapid. We want to be amused, I take it, by the employment of true sympathy, humour, and imagination. It is to the imagination that the drama makes its highest appeal. And with the hope that, as an interpreter of the drama, I have done something for that, I shall carry your generous voices in my memory and in my heart as long as my days do grow."

In Edinburgh, where he appeared as Shylock on the Monday night, he received the warmest of greetings. In Glasgow, after the performance of "The Bells" on the Saturday night, it seemed as though there would be no end to the

Photo: William Crooke, Edinburgh.

HENRY IRVING IN 1904.

cheering. After bowing his acknowledgments again and again, Irving spoke as follows:—

"It is impossible to thank you adequately for your greeting. I cannot say to you in words what I feel at this moment, but my blood speaks to you in my veins. The best of friends must part. I am sorry our engagement is over, but the parting, believe me, is only for a time. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my friends and the citizens of Glasgow for all their gracious and sweet courtesies. In this city I have many dear and valued friends. I thank the Press for their generous recognition and appreciation of our work, and I would like also to thank all in this delightful new theatre for their help in the production of our plays. I have so many remembrances of Glasgow, and I thank you sincerely for the goodwill and encouragement extended to me for many, many years. Believe me, I have very many dear and kind memories of your great city, and I carry away the pleasantest memories of the past week. I shall look forward to our next meeting, which, God willing, will be after next year, when I have to accomplish a long American tour. Good-bye. God bless you is in my heart and on my lips. I thank you all again. I remain your ever loyal, respectful, and loving servant."

In Aberdeen, the Pen and Pencil Club entertained him at supper in the Imperial Hotel. Here, again, he was in humorous mood, and he made a happy speech which will be long remembered by those who heard it. In Liverpool, he had to attend two functions in his honour on successive days. The first of these was a luncheon on the afternoon of Tuesday, 29th November, when he was the guest of the Liverpool Somerset Society, at the Adelphi Hotel. His interesting recollections of his birthplace on that occasion are recorded in the first chapter of his book. And some other of his recollections, concerning Liverpool, which he told his hearers on the next day, at a luncheon given to him at the Town Hall, by the Lord Mayor, are set down on page 74 of the first volume. On the latter occasion, he paid a graceful tribute to one of the

best of his friends : "From that time," he said, speaking of his engagement in Liverpool in the year 1860, "dates the encouragement I have always found in Liverpool—encouragement I owe, above all, to my old friend Sir Edward Russell, one of the very finest critics of the drama this country has ever known. (Applause.) My Lord Mayor, for an actor to talk about dramatic criticism is always a delicate matter. If he expresses his distrust of that form of intellectual exercise, as he sometimes does—in private—he is supposed to be smarting from well-merited rebuke. If, on the other hand, he grows enthusiastic, especially in the presence of a dramatic critic, he is open to the suspicion of trying to beguile the judge and corrupt the executioner. (Laughter.) My old friend, I hope, does not suspect me, although there are still a few nights more of my engagement at the Royal Court Theatre. But when an actor is near the end of his career there is not so much inducement to cajole the stern, unbending censor. Perhaps I am in a position now to look back with a discriminating eye upon our theatrical affairs for more than a generation ; and I can say there is no writer to whose sympathetic insight our stage owes a greater debt than to Sir Edward Russell. And this is surely a most fitting place and occasion, my Lord Mayor, to note that Sir Edward Russell has combined this unremitting and searching zeal for the drama with the discharge of high public duties, with the conduct of a great newspaper—perhaps I ought to say two great newspapers, now happily blended, though this arrangement may have the drawback that there will be only one theatrical notice where two grew before. Possibly some concession on this score may be made to the appetite of actors and managers for all the notices they can get. I say Sir Edward Russell is a living refutation of the old-fashioned notion that when a man gives his mind to the drama he is fit for nothing else, and should be watched with some anxiety by his friends. This was once a paradox, but now the time gives it proof, that a passion for dramatic art may be cherished by a responsible citizen. Yes, you have a practical example of this truth in Liverpool, which

I should not call a sentimental or scatter-brained community ; not a city where men run about looking for Utopia."

In commenting upon this speech, the Liverpool *Courier* remarked : "How important a part personality always plays in successful public appearances, whether on platform, pulpit, or stage! Sir Henry Irving illustrated this truth at the delightful function at the Town Hall yesterday. Scan as closely as you may the cold print of his utterances, as reproduced in another column, and you can form no idea of the wealth of humour which kept the table in a roar, or of the alternate flashes of eloquence revealing a rare gift of oratory. For half an hour he played upon the company as a skilled musician plays upon his instrument, and made it respond to his every mood. It was all a matter of individuality. Sir Henry felt the force and truth of his own words, and impressed upon every line, almost every word, by a mere change of tone or characteristic gesture, somewhat of the poetry and humour of his own æsthetic temperament. You will find little trace of these qualities in the reported speech ; it was in the magic of delivery that the veteran actor proved himself to be not merely a great actor, but a many-sided and cultured man."

On Friday, 9th December, the Lord Mayor of Manchester presided over a luncheon given in the Town Hall. Irving's speech was mainly humorous, touching lightly upon the changes in Manchester which had taken place since he went there in 1860, and leading up to a well-reasoned plea for a municipal theatre. The tour, which had lasted for twelve weeks, came to a close on the following night with "Waterloo" and "The Bells". The occasion called forth the following comment in the Manchester *Courier:* "Sir Henry Irving has completed, or will to-night complete, his last engagement but one in Manchester. So intimately associated with the city has he been all his life that his series of semi-final appearances at the Theatre Royal must have aroused reminiscences of the past of a pleasant character, though the ever-present consciousness of the fact that his

professional career was rapidly coming to a close, cannot fail to have occasioned more or less unpleasant reflections. There is, at the best of times, something depressing, if not absolutely painful, in looking for the last time upon scenes that have become familiar by old association, and amid which cherished friendships have been made, and, in Sir Henry's case, his past in Manchester was illumined by much that was both joyous and stimulating. Wherever he has been during his farewell tour, he has met with greetings not merely cordial, but deeply affectionate, and the speeches he has been called upon to make, in response to those demonstrations, have plainly shown the deep feeling of gratitude, and the high appreciation of the reverberating good wishes with which he has everywhere been greeted. The enthusiasm with which the crowded and brilliant audiences have received him during the week, if not quite a phenomenal experience, have afforded a substantial testimony of the esteem in which he is held by the playgoing public of Manchester, which may have had the effect of, to some extent, mitigating the inevitable sorrow at parting. Sir Henry's professional career has been one of ever-increasing distinction and triumph. This has been brought about by commanding talent in the first place, and by the influence which an unsullied reputation and dignity always exercise. Everything Sir Henry has undertaken has been acceptable because of its æsthetic qualities, its artistic and intellectual completeness, and its educational and morally elevating tendency."

Irving spent Christmas and the New Year at one of his favourite resorts, the Royal Bath Hotel, Bournemouth, and, returning to town on 5th January, 1905, made his final preparations for a tour which began at the end of that month. On Sunday, the 15th, he gave, at the Reform Club, a dinner, which had now become an annual fixture, to a small party of journalistic friends, who, on this occasion, were as follows: L. F. Austin, Alec Baird, Austin Brereton, J. M. Bulloch, Thomas Catling, G. Spencer Edwardes, J. Nicol Dunn, and Clement Shorter. His old friend and stage-manager, Harry

J. Loveday, completed the small party at the round table. Much to Irving's regret, another newspaper man, S. J. Pryor, for whom he had a great regard, and who had been at previous gatherings, was unable to be present. On the Thursday following, he responded for "The Drama" at the tercentenary dinner, in celebration of the publication of "Don Quixote," at the Hôtel Métropole.

The spring tour duly began, on 23rd January, at Portsmouth. It was to have lasted until April, but illness intervened, and it was not completed. Irving played in Southampton, Boscombe, Plymouth, Exeter, and Bath, in addition to Portsmouth, on the following dates: Portsmouth, 23rd to 28th January; Southampton, 30th January to 1st February; Boscombe, 2nd to 4th February; Plymouth, 6th to 11th February; Exeter, 13th to 15th February; Bath, 16th to 18th February. In the latter city, on Friday, 17th February, he unveiled a monument to the celebrated actor, James Quin (1693-1766). But the incessant work of so many years had at last told upon his iron constitution, and, although he guarded himself very carefully, he was liable to be affected by any sudden change of temperature. The journey from Bath to Wolverhampton on Sunday, 19th February, was exceptionally cold, and Irving got a thorough chill. He was completely run down, but he insisted upon playing on the Monday night.

On returning to the hotel, he was quite exhausted, so much that he fainted on reaching the hall. On the Tuesday, he was to have received the public presentation of an address in the Town Hall, but it was necessary to reserve his strength and this ordeal was abandoned. He acted that night, before a crowded house, in "Becket". This, however, was the last effort which could be made at that time. The doctors forbade him to act for at least two months, and the rest of the tour was cancelled. This, of course, was the signal for certain busy-bodies of the Press to jump to the conclusion that Irving was at the last gasp and would be seen no more. But these unveracious gossipers knew nothing of the man or of his enormous will and brain power. His bodily strength

was impaired, but he had not lost the inherent force of his nature or his capacity for fighting. Before the end of February, he felt well enough to carry out his London season and made his plans to do so. On the 1st March, he sent me the following telegram: "Untruthful paragraph in last night's —— concerning London season, without least foundation. No more bulletin necessary. Best wishes.—Irving, Wolverhampton." On the 5th of March, he was well enough to write a letter to me concerning these malicious reports in certain papers which, in due course, were proved to be mere inventions. He recuperated at Torquay, where he stayed at the Imperial Hotel, attended to the details of his business, and, as he had planned in the summer of 1904, fulfilled his engagement at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

Before the conclusion of that engagement—on Sunday, 4th June—he took the chair at a dinner given by the leading members of the theatrical profession, at the Savoy Hotel, to the veteran dramatic critic, Joseph Knight. Mr. Knight, as readers of the first volume of this book are aware, had not hesitated to speak freely of Henry Irving during his early years at the Lyceum. But Mr. Knight's criticisms were always couched in decorous terms and they never contained any spark of malice. Long before 1905, the critic and the actor had become good friends. Irving, at this dinner to Mr. Knight, made some interesting observations on dramatic criticism. "My own observation of dramatic criticism," he said, "is pretty extensive and it convinced me long ago that the critics do speak their minds, although they may not be all of the same mind. There is a cheerful diversity. Touching upon criticism on one occasion, I ventured to use the phrase 'rapture of disagreement,' to describe the effect produced sometimes by the reading of many notices. An eminent critic has been at the pains more than once since then to explain to me on philosophical grounds why it is impossible for all the critics to take the same view, and say the same things. I am glad they do not. The sameness would be terrible. Even if they always said that we were all in-

comparable, that would cease to be stimulating after the first shock of surprise, and we should yearn for a discordant note. But there is one thing we do look for in criticism—the quality which Russell Lowell, himself a great literary critic, called the first essential—the quality of sympathy. Sympathy our friend Knight has always shown—the sympathy which springs from a genuine love of the stage. I don't know how many years he has been writing about the Drama. My own memory of him goes back as far as 1860. I knew very early in my professional life that the good opinion of Joe Knight was a great stimulant to a young actor. Well, here he is writing still with undiminished zest, with unclouded vision, with immense knowledge, and with that sympathy which enables a critic to appreciate a purpose even when it is unachieved, and when the means at the young player's command are as yet immature. There are many of us who have reason to bear this in grateful remembrance. The stage owes a great debt to a man who writes with a keen eye for the best, but also with a handsome acknowledgment of the second best, and with a single-minded desire to maintain the public interest in the Drama, as apart from some things which are not drama, though they may pass by its name. But I am not going to give our friend a lecture on the Drama, the spirit and the history of which he knows better than any of us. Nor am I here to offer any elaborate eulogy to a man whose simplicity of character would reject it. The object of this gathering is to mark our sense of Mr. Knight's services to the stage, and to the dramatic calling, by an expression of goodwill, which embraces not this or that artist alone, but the whole of our profession."

It is good to know that Irving's last season in London, beginning on Saturday, 29th April with "Becket," and ending on 10th June, was a financial success. His clear profit was very considerable, and, harassed as he was by the monetary strain which shortened his life, this must have been a little relief to him, as well as a satisfaction on other grounds. "Becket" was given on twenty-two occasions, "The Mer-

chant of Venice" on twelve. "Louis XI." was played on Tuesday, 6th June, Thursday, 8th June, and Friday, 9th June. On Monday, 5th June, on Wednesday afternoon, 7th June, and on the last night, Saturday, the 10th, "Waterloo" preceded "Becket," the prologue to Tennyson's play being omitted at those performances. In regard to the authorship of "Becket," there was now a line on the programme, under the name of Alfred, Lord Tennyson—"Adapted for the stage by Henry Irving". Although Irving at last took credit to himself for the alterations which made "Becket" possible as a stage-play, he was still paying a fee of ten guineas a performance for the acting rights. This, however, was cheap in comparison with the thirty pounds a night which he had paid to the French authors for "Dante".

The end was now approaching, although the actor little knew it. He still spoke hopefully of his formal farewell of the stage, and he had planned another tour of America, to begin in San Francisco. But that was abandoned, and the autumn tour of the English provinces substituted. Continuous work was a necessity. His expenses were now reduced to the smallest amount compatible with his work and position. They were still heavy, for his company was an expensive one, although Miss Terry was no longer a member, and his liberal treatment of those with whom he came in contact still needed a substantial treasury. His expenses, indeed, were always out of proportion to his receipts, enormous as those were. His expenses, for instance, at Drury Lane, during his last season at that house, amounted to £4,868 2s. 4d.—an average of over £131 a performance. The salaries of his company and staff came to £2,154, and the supernumeraries swallowed up an additional £241. The stage staff and expenses came to another £843, and he paid £234 in authors' fees. Yet this was doing things moderately—for him.

The following is the statement of Henry Irving's gross receipts and his expenses from the period when he took possession of the Lyceum Theatre, 31st August, 1878, until the end of his season in London, 10th June, 1905:—

Gross Receipts:—			
London Admissions and (Rent of Lyceum)	£1,177,734 1 1		
(America and the Provinces) Admissions Tours	1,049,729 7 5		
Rent of Saloons, etc.	13,584 13 4		
Sale of Books and Pictures	7,955 7 2		
Miscellaneous Receipts	12,634 1 1		
Total Receipts		£2,261,637 10 1	
Deduct Outgoings:—			
Working Expenses	£1,877,028 0 6		
Production Account	221,178 15 5		
Expenditure on House	59,862 9 9		
Law Expenses and Audit	3,948 19 0		
Cost of Books, Pictures, etc.	6,272 1 5		
Total Expenditure		2,168,290 6 1	
Net Profit		£93,347 4 0	

Which divided over the period from 31st August, 1878 to 10th June, 1905 (= 27 years) is an average profit of £3,457 6 1 per annum.

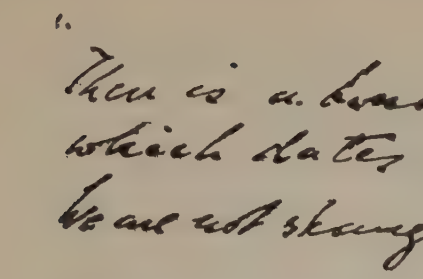
Note.—The above figures include receipts from letting Lyceum Theatre, but do not include the £26,500 received from the Syndicate. He paid back to the Syndicate £25,800.

Total receipts from all sources:—		
London	£1,221,281 0 11	
America	711,016 18 4	
Provinces	329,339 10 10	
		£2,261,637 10 1

Allusion has been made to the financial success of the last season in London. That was satisfactory, in itself, but the keynote to the season was the affection of the public for their old favourite. Much of that affection was showered upon him by a new audience. It is one of the greatest tributes to his genius that, when the people felt that they could not see the greatest actor of the day much longer—never again, perhaps—they were eager to do him homage. It is also an incontrovertible proof of his greatness that he invariably drew to him the youth of the time. This was convincingly proved in 1878, when he began his long career of management at the Lyceum. It was demonstrated over and over again during his last six weeks in London. His old admirers were staunch, but hundreds of young men and women went to see him for the first time, and, seeing, admired. Nay, more; on the afternoon of Wednesday, 7th June, the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, held an audience the like of which had never been seen within the walls of that historic

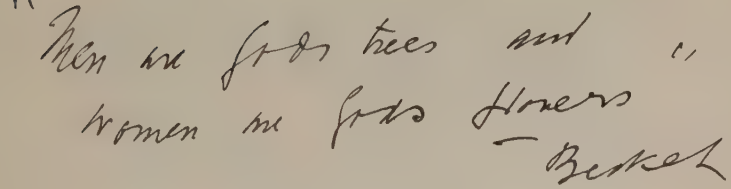
playhouse, at the representation of a serious piece. Many mothers had brought their little children to see—for the first and last time—Henry Irving. The stalls were half-filled with ladies who held their babes—some of them were not more than three or four years old—aloft so that they might see, and be told of the event in time to come, the man who had accomplished great things and won this great glory. On the last night but one, when he had acted Louis XI. with marvellous vigour, it seemed as though the audience would never be done applauding and calling their favourite before them again and again. On the last night of all, the scene was even more touching. A short speech of farewell had been prepared, but the delivery of it was interspersed with so many cheers and so many cries of "Irving's men" and "come back," that much of its sequence was lost. The end of it was to the effect that he intended to visit America again, in the early part of the following year, "and, if all be well, I shall meet you again next year. I shall look forward to that time with delight, and, with a heart full of deep and grateful remembrance, I respectfully and affectionately bid you good-bye". He was summoned to the footlights time and time again, and many of the spectators sang a verse from "Auld Lang Syne". In vain was the safety curtain lowered. Hundreds of people remained shouting and applauding until the actor, having changed from his Becket costume to evening dress, was endeavouring to address the representatives of the master-carpenters of the London theatres who had assembled on the stage. It was useless, however. The tumult in front was too much. The curtain was raised, and, taking the audience into the family party, as it were, he proceeded with his address, and, with a final "Good-bye" and "God bless you," retired from view. Even then, late as it was, a large crowd gathered at the stage-door to cheer the actor as, tired out, but deeply touched by the unique display of affection, he left the scene of triumph.

His Drury Lane season was, to all intents and purposes, his farewell of London. As a matter of record, however, it

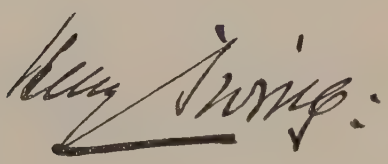


"There is a bond between us which dates before to-day—we are not strangers."—VANDERDECKEN.

"I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul rememb'ring my good friends."
RICHARD II.



"Men are God's trees and
Women are God's flowers."
BECKET.



must be stated that, on the afternoon of Thursday, 15th June, he appeared at His Majesty's Theatre and acted Corporal Brewster on the occasion of the testimonial matinée to his friend and comrade of old days, Mr. Lionel Brough. Business arrangements detained him in London for some weeks, but he managed to get a rest, which was much needed, for his strength was ebbing fast, at Scarborough and Whitby, before starting his provincial tour. Great need had he of physical strength and mental fortitude. In the middle of September, on Friday night, the 15th, Louis Frederick Austin died suddenly, at the Hôtel Métropole, Brighton. This was a terrible shock to Irving, for he had brought Austin to London in the early seventies, and had made him his confidential secretary. The two men were close friends. Irving had a deep affection for his brilliant and loyal comrade, as, indeed, Austin was. By a curious chain of circumstances, it fell to my lot to attend to all the details in connection with the burial of Austin, who was, also, for several of the last years of his life, one of my best and most valued friends. I was the first person to see Irving after the shock to us both, and, for once in his life, although he was very quiet and spoke but little, his feelings so over-mastered him that he begged me to stay with him as long as possible. This I did, but my duties took me to Brighton on the Saturday night, as there were many sad offices to be filled. The first of these missions over, I sent word to Irving, who was then in London, of its accomplishment, and received from him the following telegram: "Deeply indebted. Please represent me till all over and send wreath in loving memory of an old and valued friend." I spent more than one evening with Irving at Stratton Street, after that sad event, and he spoke long and earnestly of our comrade. He said, more than once, "What a shock to his friends," and I knew, such was his own unselfish nature, that he did not wish his own friends to be shocked by his sudden death. Yet in four weeks to a day, almost to an hour, his own end came just as suddenly.

On Monday, 2nd October, he began his tour at the

THEATRE ROYAL

AND OPERA HOUSE,

Manningham Lane, BRADFORD.

LESSEE ... JOHN HART

(All communications regarding the business of the Theatre to be addressed "The Manager.")

Monday, Oct. 9th, 1905,

FOR

SIX NIGHTS ONLY

NO MATINEE

FAREWELL

OF

HENRY IRVING

AND HIS COMPANY.

MONDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHTS October 9th & 14th.	THE **MERCHANT of VENICE** Shylock ... ... HENRY IRVING
TUESDAY AND FRIDAY NIGHTS October 10th & 13th.	**BECKET** By ALFRED (Lord) TENNYSON. Adapted for the Stage by HENRY IRVING. Becket (Chancellor and Archbishop) ... HENRY IRVING
WEDNESDAY NIGHT October 11th. (ONLY TIME)	**LOUIS XI.** By CASIMIR DELAVIGNE. Adapted and Arranged by DION BOUCICAULT. Louis XI. ... ... HENRY IRVING
THURSDAY NIGHT October 12th. (ONLY TIME)	KING RENE'S DAUGHTER FOLLOWED BY **THE BELLS** Mathias HENRY IRVING

Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield, with "The Merchant of Venice". His last days brought him many tokens of affection. "A great sheaf of crimson roses was one lady's tribute to Sir Henry Irving last night," recorded a local paper. "Flung across the footlights from the bottom right-hand box when Sir Henry came on at the end of the final scene to acknowledge the welcome accorded him, the flowers failed to reach the centre of the stage, and dropped a fragrant, vivid mass just by the garden seat on which Jessica and Lorenzo had breathed their lovers' rhapsody to the moon". The flowers were not lost to him, and he knew—although he had no personal acquaintance with the lady—that the occupants of the box were brother and sister, who had been in the stalls on many nights during his previous season at Drury Lane, and had come to Sheffield, strangers to him as they were personally, out of admiration, indeed affection. The knowledge of this incident pleased him, as I know, for I was with him at the time. I saw him play in Sheffield, in addition to Shylock, Becket and Mathias, and, although he acted these characters finely, it was plain that his physical strength was undergoing too great a strain.

In addition to acting in Sheffield, he attended a luncheon given to him with the Lord Mayor at the head, and, again in Bradford, where he began his engagement on Monday, the 9th, as Shylock, the Mayor of Bradford presided at a similar function and presented him with an address in which his work was highly eulogised. His reply took the form of his oft-repeated plea for municipal recognition of the drama, and he made a pregnant allusion to himself—"one the sands of whose life are running fast". It was an effort to him to go to the luncheon, and it was so evident to those about him that his strength was failing that they obtained his consent to omitting "The Bells" from the future programme. On the Friday night, the 13th, he played Becket as impressively, as beautifully, as ever. He then drove to his hotel, with one of his staff, Mr. J. W. Sheppard, for companion, but spoke never a word on the journey. On arriving at the hotel, he

collapsed. He was just able to murmur to Mr. Sheppard, "Give me a chair," was placed on a couch in the hall, and died at ten minutes to twelve o'clock, from the results of the catarrh which for years had been undermining his system.

His death was a shock to the entire community. But the suddenness of it had the effect of arousing the pent-up affection of the public. Much of that affection, as we have seen, had been in evidence during the previous twelve months. And now there was nothing to stay the outburst. The newspapers, of course, teemed with long articles, and over a hundred tributes in verse appeared within a week. The most remarkable thing, however, was the wish of the people that Irving should be buried in Westminster Abbey. This wish was expressed in many ways, and before the memorial to the Dean of Westminster, praying that the interment might take place in the Abbey, was drawn up. The consent was given readily. In accordance with the regulations of the Abbey, the body was cremated. On the eve of the funeral, the remains lay in state at No. 1 Stratton Street, the residence of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. Here a great crowd of mourners passed in and out all day long. In thus testifying to her respect and admiration for Henry Irving, the good and gracious lady, who was to follow him so soon, performed the last of the many acts of kindness—her constant support of him socially—which had been so helpful to him in the early days of his management. On the Thursday evening, the coffin was removed, amid a great assemblage of the populace, which lined the entire route from Stratton Street, to the Abbey, where, in the Chapel of St. Faith, it remained until the funeral on the next day, Friday, 20th October. Among the pall-bearers, whose names are given on page 347, was Lord Burnham, who like his father, J. M. Levy, had, in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, loyally supported the deceased actor in all his high endeavour. Lady Irving, who was accompanied by her two sons, also, with kindly consideration, brought with her Mr. Harry J. Loveday; and, in addition, those at the grave-side in Poets' Corner included

Mrs. H. B. Irving, Mrs. Laurence Irving, Mr. Bram Stoker, and Mr. Walter Collinson. The King and the Prince and Princess of Wales were represented, and Her Majesty sent a wreath, accompanied by a card bearing, in her own writing, this inscription: "With deepest regret, from the Queen. 'Into Thy hands O Lord—into Thy hands'". The words quoted by Her Majesty were the closing words of Irving's career, for they are the last words spoken by Becket, in which character Irving may be said to have died.

Westminster Abbey has never held a more grief-stricken congregation than at the solemn moment when the coffin containing the ashes of Henry Irving was carried, to the strains of the funeral march composed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie for "Coriolanus" at the Lyceum, to its resting place amid England's honoured dead. And, when the Dean of Westminster, who had left his sick room in order to do this office for the player, pronounced the Benediction, the heart which did not throb with emotion must indeed have been stony. At that moment, my mind went back to a pathetic scene before the public were admitted to the Abbey. By good fortune, as I think it, I happened to be at one of the cloister gates, when a constable told me that a man in great grief asked to be admitted and begged me to see him. The poor fellow was an old coachman who had driven Henry Irving for some years. There was no doubting the depth of his emotion. And I was more rejoiced that this humble admirer should be in the Abbey than I can tell, for he was one of the people, and it was in the hearts of the people that Henry Irving won his great place.

PARTS PLAYED BY HENRY IRVING.

EDINBURGH.

(9TH FEBRUARY, 1857—13TH SEPTEMBER, 1859.)

Sir Arthur Lassell, Jasper Plum, and Stephen Plum, in "All that Glitters is not Gold".

Sylvius, also Orlando, in "As You Like It".

Ferdinand, also Count Medora, in "Asmodeus".

Herbert, in "The Advocate's Daughter".

General Duclos, in "The Avalanche".

Lord Welford, in "The Artist's Wife".

Mr. Peregrine Pyefinch, in "An Hour at Seville".

Richard Hargrave, in "The Anchor of Hope".

Seaweed, Lieutenant Pike, and Captain Crosstree, in "Black-Eyed Susan".

Prince Rudolph, in "The Blind Boy".

Edmond de Mailly, in "Book the Third Chapter the First".

Mr. Henry Higgins, also Frank Friskly, in "Boots at the Swan".

Lieutenant Varley, also Captain Harcourt, in "The Boarding School".

M'Kay, and M'Intosh, in "The Battle of Inch".

Augustus, in "Barney, the Baron".

Pester, in "The Bashful Irishman".

John Beauchamp, in "Bathing".

Ned Spanker, in "A Blighted Being".

Torrington, in "The Balance of Comfort".

Edmund Earlybird, in "The Birthplace of Podgers".

Beauchamp, in "Beulah Spa".

Captain Craigengelt, in "The Bride of Lammermoor".

Philip, in "A Bright To-morrow".

Albert, in "The Bottle Imp".

Didier, in "The Bohemians".

Davenport, in "British Legion".

Tom Tunnell, in "The Bay of Biscay".

Count Manfredi, in "Born to Good Luck".

Mr. Crummy, in "Betsy Baker".

Mr. Wildoats Heartycheer, in "The Bonnie Fishwife".

De Saubigné, in "The Carpenter of Rouen".

Giordini, also Meynard, in "The Corsican Brothers".

Pisanio, in "Cymbeline".

The Nobleman, in "Clari, the Maid of Milan".

Vincent, in "The Cabin Boy".

Frank, in "Custom and Country".

Tam Maxwell, James Birkie, and King James, in "Cramond Brig".

Antoine, in "The Cagot".

Nat Nowlan, in "The Charming Polly".

Hortensio, also Biondello, in "Catherine and Petruchio".

Yussuff, in "Conrad and Medora".

Alphonse de Nyon, in "The Creole; or, Love's Fetters".

Gruff Tackleton, in "The Cricket on the Hearth".

The King, in "Charles XII."

Percy, in "The Castle Spectre".

Frederick Stork, also Francis, in "The Crown Prince".

Dangle, in "The Critic".

Captain Killingly, also Captain Poodle, in "Catching an Heiress".

Mr. Palmerston, in "The Dumb Man of Manchester".

Count Corvenio, Antonio, and Strapado, in "The Dumb Maid of Genoa".

Clayton, in "Dred".

Captain Templeton, in "Deaf as a Post".

Lord Randolph, in "Douglas".

Count d'Anville, in "Dominique, the Deserter".

Alfred Fitzfrolic, also Lord Mincington, in "The Dancing Barber".

Richard Penderell, in "The Dream at Sea".

Mr. Ogler, in "The Drapery Question".

David Copperfield.

Don José, in "Don Cæsar de Bazan".

Colonel Freelove and Lord Rivers, in "The Day after the Wedding".

Mr. John Timkins, in "The Double Dummy".

Frank Topham, in "Don't Judge by Appearances".

Octavio, in "Don Giovanni".

Rudolphus, in "The Drunkard's Doom".

Captain Seymour, in "Diamond Cut Diamond".

Adolphus Jobling, in "Daddy Hardacre".

Dombey, in "Dombey and Son".

Walmsley, in "The Evil Genius".

Colonel Mountfort, in "Ella Rosenberg".

Charles Digit, in "Every Cloud has a Silver Lining".

Claude Frollo, in "Esmeralda".

Captain Popham, in "The Eton Boy".

Captain Thompson, in "A Fascinating Individual".

Baron Longueville, in "The Foundling of the Forest".

Philario, in "Fazio".

Lieutenant Mowbrey, also Toby Vanish, in "The Flying Dutchman".

Piers Talbot, in "The Fire Raiser".

The Prince, in "Frankenstein".

Linton, Leybourne, Captain Laverock, Alfred, and Ishmael, in "The Flowers of the Forest".

Kenmure, in "The Falls of Clyde".

Didier, in "The French Spy".

Count de Valmore, also Alfred Seaborne, in "Fraud and Its Victims".

Lord Dalgarno, in "The Fortunes of Nigel".

Blake, in "The Fairy Circle".

Altamont, in "Forty and Fifty".

Captain Niddermannersteinchwanchoingen, in "Frederick of Prussia".

Carbine, Sergeant Musquetoun, and Gilderoy, in "Gilderoy".

Charley, Young Mr. Simpson, and Harry Collier, in "Good for Nothing".

Henry Bertram, Dirk Hatterick, and Colonel Mannering, in "Guy Mannering".

Bates, in "The Gamester".

Luke Hatfield, in "The Gipsy Farmer".

Ned Keogh, also George O'Kennedy, in "Green Bushes".

The Governor, in "The Governor's Wife".

Evan Pritchard, in "Gwynneth Vaughan".

Langley, in "Grandfather Whitehead".

The Organist, in "Gaberlunzie".

Don Manuel, in "Giralda".

Sir William Worthey, in "The Gentle Shepherd".

Marston, in "Green Hills of the Far West".

Lampedo, also Lopez, in "The Honeymoon".

Mr. Furlong, in "Handy Andy".

Guildenstern, Horatio, the King, the Priest, the Ghost, Osric, and Laertes, in "Hamlet".

Philip, in "High Life Below Stairs".

Sir Thomas Clifford, also Tinsel, in "The Hunchback".

Captain Lejoyeux, in "Honesty is the Best Policy".

Charles, in "His Last Legs".

Earl of Surrey, in "King Henry VIII."

Charles, in "The Happiest Day of My Life".

Lord Quaverley, in "Helping Hands".

Fergus Graham, in "A Hard Struggle".

Cyril Baliol, in "Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh".

Smatter, in "Hunting a Turtle".

Black Frank, the Duke of Argyle, and Reuben Butler, in "The Heart of Midlothian".

Lykon, also Myron, in "Ingomar".

Charles, in "The Irish Tutor".

Sir Charles Lavender, in "The Irish Tiger".

Victor Dubois, in "Ici On Parle Français".

Armstrong, also Orson, in "The Iron Chest".

Sir Reginald Frondebœuf, in "Ivanhoe".

Earl of Sussex, in "The Idiot Witness".

Henry Travers, in "The Irish Emigrant".

Mackenzie, also Captain Dixon, in "The Irish Lion".

Coquin, in "Isabelle".

Captain Herbert, in "Irish Assurance".

Connor, also M. Voyage, in "Ireland as it Was".

Captain Florvil, in "The Invincibles".

Kelly, in "Ida May".

George Lane, in "The Irish Post".

Malden, in "Irish a Honey".

Sir Richard Wroughton, in "The Jacobite".

Sigismund Fanshawe, in "Jessy Vere".

Belmour, in "Jane Shore".

Lucille, in "Joan of Arc".

Baron Fitzjeffrey, also Mayfly, in "John Overy".

George Heriot, also the Counsel for the Prosecution, in "Janet Pride".

Dumouchard, in "The Jersey Girl".

José Rimiero, in "Jack Robinson and His Monkey".

Curan, in "King Lear".

Philip, King of France, in "King John".

Colonel Vane, in "The King's Wager".

Duke de Chabonnes, in "The Knight of Arva".

Sir Almeric, in "King René's Daughter".

Franquille, in "The King of the Peacocks".

Wayland Smith, in a burlesque of "Kenilworth".

Claude Melnotte, Beauséant, and Captain Gervais, in "The Lady of Lyons".

Captain Amersfort, in "The Loan of a Lover".

Tristran, also Coitier, in "Louis XI."

Sir Charles Lavender, also Mr. Bookly, in "The Ladies' Club".

Mr. Simon Hornblower, in "The Laughing Hyena".

Wyndham Bowyer, in "The Lonely Man of the Ocean".

Ned Martin, in "The Lost Ship".

Sir Charles Howard, and Captain Maydenblush, in "The Little Treasure".

Charles, in "The Lottery Ticket"

Squire Chase, also Charles Maydew, in "Luke the Labourer".

Malcolm Graeme, in "The Lady of the Lake".

Henry Wentworth, in "The Last Man".

Lord Darnley, Earl Lumley, and Will Elliott, in "Lord Darnley".

Louis, in "Like and Unlike".

Philip Amory, in "The Lamplighter".

Neville, also Waller, in "The Love Chase".

Sparkler, in "Little Dorrit".

Dazzle, also Charles Courtly, in "London Assurance".

Ulrick, in "Love".

The Wolf, in a pantomime, "Little Bo-Peep".

André, in "Lucille".

Gustave de Grignon, in "The Ladies' Battle".

Lorain, in "The Lost Husband".

Lord Lyndsay, also Jasper Drysdale, in "Mary Queen of Scots".

Seyton, Rosse, Banquo, and Macduff, in "Macbeth".

Jupiter, in "Midas".

Captain Gasconade, in "The Mysterious Stranger".

Salarino, also Bassanio, in "The Merchant of Venice".

Adrien, in "Music hath Charms".

Oakheart, in "My Poll and My Partner Joe".

Brozzo, and Gianetto Sampiero, in "Matteo Falcone".

Philip D'Arville in "Michael Erle".

Jason, in "Medea".

De Ferney, in "Memoirs of the Devil".

Algernon, in "The Maid with the Milking-Pail".

Mr. Frederick Younghusband, also Mr. Lionel Lynx, in "Married Life".

Maxwell, in "Mother and Child are Doing Well".

Antoine Deval, in "The Midnight Watch".

Henry Desgrais, in "Mischief-Making".

Briefless, in "The Middle Temple".

Captain Dudley Smooth, in "Money".

Markland, in "Marie Ducange".

Snarl, also Soaper, in "Masks and Faces".

Mowbray, in "Mind your Own Business".

Selva, in "Masaniello".

Edward Waverley, in "My Wife's Mother".

Mr. Tonnish, in "The Middy Ashore".

James Greenfield, in "The Momentous Question".

Egerton, in "The Man of the World".

Mr. Langford, in "My Precious Betsy".

Count de Provence, in "Marie Antoinette".

Frederick de Courcy, in "The Marble Heart".

Wrangle, in "The Man with the Carpet Bag".

Herbert Manifest, in "Marriage a Lottery".

Don Pedro, in "The Muleteer of Toledo".

The Marquis de Brancador, in "Mephistopheles".

Fabian Leslie, in "The Miller of Whetstone".

John Brush, in "Mr. and Mrs. Pringle".

Secretary Sampson, in "The May Queen".

Captain Touchwood, in "My Aunt's Husband".

Lieutenant Bowling, in "The Milliner's Holiday".

Gaston de Montclar, in "Marianne the Vivandière".

Fernando, in "The Maid and the Magpie".

George, in "The Miller's Maid".

D'Aubigné, in "The Man with the Iron Mask".

Captain Burnish, in "The Nervous Man".

Flipper, in "Number One Round the Corner".

Ned O'Grady, in "Norah Creina".

Marquis de Treval, in "Not a Bad Judge".

Nicholas, also Mantellini, in "Nicholas Nickleby".

The Duke de Vendome, in "Nothing Venture, Nothing Win".

Sydenham Simmerton, in "An Object of Interest".

Charles Benedict, in "The Old Gentleman".

Monks, in "Oliver Twist".

Henry Seymour, in "Our Gal".

Montano, the Messenger, and Cassio, in "Othello".

Hal Harsfield, in "The Ocean of Life".

Frederick, in "Old Joe and Young Joe".

Marquis de Ligny, in "Our Wife".

Colonel Albert, in "Our Mary Anne".

Lieutenant Fusile, also Mr. Somerhill, in "P.P.; or, the Man and the Tiger".

Berthier, also De Cevennes, in "Plot and Passion".

Camillo, in "Perdita; or, the Royal Milkmaid".

Leander, in "The Padlock".

Lieutenant Griffiths, the Captain, and the Pilot, in "The Pilot".

Harry Stanley, in "Paul Pry".

Henry, in "Paddy Miles' Boy".

Dubois, in "Peter Bell, the Waggoner".

Charles Paragon, in "Perfection".

Lister, in "The Patrician's Daughter".

An Ogre, and also a Demon, in "Puss in Boots".

Minos, in "Pluto and Proserpine".

Rosanne, in "Perourou, the Bellows Mender, and the Beauty of Lyons".

Sir George, in "A Pleasant Neighbour".

Colonel Pazzi, in "A Prince for an Hour".

Augustus Burr, in "The Porter's Knot".

Walter Warren, in "A Poor Girl's Temptation".

Charles Edward, in "Prince Charles Edward Stuart".

Lieutenant Wentworth, in "Queen Mary's Bower".

Francis Osbaldiston, Rashleigh, and Rob Roy, in "Rob Roy".

Catesby, Henry VI., and Richmond, in "Richard III."

Paris, also Tybalt, in "Romeo and Juliet".

Carlos, in "The Revenge".

De Lacy, in "Rory O'More".

Bolding, in "The Rendezvous".

Alonzo, also the Duke, in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife".

The Gamekeeper, also Alfred Highflyer, in "A Roland for an Oliver".

Raymond, also Jacques, in "Raymond and Agnes".

Charles, in "Robert Macaire".

Marquis de Preville, in "The Rival Pages".

Frinlan, also Baron Hoffman, in "The Rag-Picker of Paris".

Cummin, in "King Robert the Bruce".

Captain Nugent, in "The Rifle Brigade".

Orleans, also Louis XIII., in "Richelieu".

Unit, in "Rural Felicity".

Frank Floss, in "Ruby Rattler".

Captain Beaugard, in "The Review; or, the Wags of Windsor".

Faulkland, also Captain Absolute, in "The Rivals".

Toby Heywood, in "The Rent Day".

Jeremy, in "She Stoops to Conquer".

Dunbilk, in "Still Waters Run Deep".

Count Wintersen, also Francis, in "The Stranger".

M. de Rosamburt, in "The Somnambulist".

Somerdyke, in "The Slave".

Andrew Hopley, in "Susan Hopley".

Frederick, in "The Scholar".

Horace Mordaunt, in "Sixteen String Jack".

Captain Shortcut, in "The Spitfire".

Captain Spoff, in "Shocking Events".

Darville, in "The Spitalfields Weaver".

Mr. Charles Chester, also Mr. Narcissus Boss, in "Single Life".

Sandford, also Charles Franklin in "Sweethearts and Wives".

Dupuis, in "The Secret".

Captain Vauntington, also Mr. Nicodemus, in "The Spectre Bridegroom".

Frank Vincent in "The Serious Family".

Henry Frampton, in "Sandy Mc Donald".

Robert Vaughan, in "St. Mary's Eve".

Francis Baron Trenck, in "Saint Patrick's Eve".

Calverton Hal, in "State Secrets".

Captain Vivid, in "The Siamese Twins".

Prince, in "The Sentinel".

Tagg, in "The Spoiled Child".

Venoma, in "The Sleeping Beauty".

Samuel, in "Samuel in Search of Himself".

Hans Moritz, in "Somebody Else".

Malfort, jun., also Frank Heartall, in "The Soldier's Daughter".

Roslyn, in "Saint Clair of the Isles".

Lord Lovell, in "Spring Gardens".

Luke Brandon, in "Self-Accusation; or A Brother's Love".

Mr. Bromley, in "Simpson and Co."

Charles Clinton, also Mathew Bates, in "Time Tries All".

Delorme, in "'Twas I".

Athos, in "The Three Musketeers".

Henry, in "Teddy the Tiler".

Hortensio, Biondello, and Petruchio, in "The Taming of The Shrew".

Fontaine, in "Thérèse; or, The Orphan of Geneva".

John Bull, in "The Two Gregories".

Philliput, in "The Trumpeter's Daughter".

Alfred, also Mat Ironhand, in "Tom Cringle".

George Acorn, also Fenton, in "The Toodles".

Appius Claudius, and a Soldier, in "Virginius".

Macaire, in "Victorine".

Charles, in "The Virginia Mummy".

Mr. Herbert Fitzherbert, in "Victims".

Maillard, in "The Vagrant".

Cleomenes, also Florizel, in "The Winter's Tale".

Michael, also Gesler, in "William Tell".

Monteith, in "Wallace: The Hero of Scotland".

Clanronald, in "Warlock of the Glen".

Gregoire, Count de Cuissy, and Ronald, in "The Wandering Boys".

Walter Barnard, in "The Wreck Ashore".

Frederick, in "The Woman Hater".

Count Florio, also Leonardo Gonzago, in "The Wife: A Tale of Mantua".

Don Lopez, also Don Scipio, in "Where There's a Will There's a Way".

Charles Alison, in "The Wraith of the Lake".

Tom Tipton, in "Wanted 1,000

Spirited Young Milliners for the Gold Diggings".

Charles Chester, in "The Water Witches".

Frederick, in "The Wonder: A Woman Keeps a Secret".

Sir Philip Elton, also Richard Oliver, in "The Writing on the Wall".

Mr. Twitter, in "The Widow's Victim".

Arthur, in "The Young Scamp".

Krakwitz, in "Your Life's in Danger".

Frank Melrose, in "The Young Mother".

LONDON.

ST. JAMES'S.

(October, 1866, to November, 1867.)

Doricourt, in "The Belle's Stratagem".

* Rawdon Scudamore, in "Hunted Down".

Harry Dornton, in "The Road to Ruin".

* The O'Hoolagan, in "A Rapid Thaw".

Joseph Surface, in "The School for Scandal".

Robert Macaire.

* Count Falcon, in "Idalia".

Charles Arundel, in "My Aunt's Advice".

Robert Audley, in "Lady Audley's Secret".

Harry Thorncote, in "Only a Clod".

Charles Torrens, in "The Serious Family".

Felix Featherley, in "The Widow Hunt".

* Charles Mowbray, in "A Tale of Proceda".

Ferment, in "The School of Reform".

QUEEN'S.

(December, 1867, to March, 1869.)

Petruchio, in "Katherine and Petruchio".

* Bob Gassitt, in "Dearer than Life".

* Bill Sikes, in "Oliver Twist".

Charles Surface, in "The School for Scandal".

Faulkland, in "The Rivals".

* Robert Redburn, in "The Lancashire Lass".

* Robert Arnold,in "Not Guilty".

Young Marlow, in "She Stoops to Conquer".

De Neuville, in "Plot and Passion".

Victor Dubois, in "Ici On Parle Français".

John Peerybingle, in "Dot".

HAYMARKET.

Cool, in "London Assurance," 5th June, 1868.

* Captain Robert Fitzhubert, in "All for Money," 12th July, 1869.

DRURY LANE.

Brown, in "The Spitalfields Weaver," 11th March, 1869.

* Compton Kerr, in "Formosa," 5th August, 1869.

Joseph Surface, in "The School for Scandal," 8th June, 1876.

GAIETY.

* Mr. Reginald Chevenix, in "Uncle Dick's Darling," 13th December, 1869.

VAUDEVILLE.

(16th April, 1870, to May, 1871.)

* Alfred Skimmington, in "For Love or Money," 16th April, 1870.

*Digby Grant, in "Two Roses," 4th June, 1870.

Frank Friskly, in "Boots at the Swan," 1870-1871.

Colonel Kirke, in "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing," 1870-1871.

LYCEUM.

(UNDER THE BATEMAN MANAGEMENT), 11TH SEPTEMBER, 1871, TO 1878.

*Landry Barbeau, in "Fanchette," 11th September, 1871.

*Jingle, in "Pickwick," 23rd October, 1871.

*Mathias, in "The Bells," 25th November, 1871.

Jeremy Diddler, in "Raising the Wind," 30th March, 1872.

*Charles, in "Charles the First," 28th September, 1872.

*Eugene Aram, in "Eugene Aram," 19th April, 1873.

Richelieu, 27th September, 1873.

*Philip, in "Philip," 7th February, 1874.

Hamlet, 31st October, 1874.

Macbeth, 18th September, 1875.

Othello, 14th February, 1876.

*Philip of Spain, in "Queen Mary," 18th April, 1876.

Doricourt, in "The Belle's Stratagem," 12th June, 1876.

Tristan, in "King René's Daughter," 23rd June, 1876.

Richard the Third, 29th January, 1877.

Lesurques and Dubosc, in "The Lyons Mail," 19th May, 1877.

Louis XI., 9th March, 1878.

*Vanderdecken, 8th June, 1878.

LYCEUM.

(HIS OWN MANAGEMENT), 30th DECEMBER, 1878, TO 19th JULY, 1902.

Claude Melnotte, in "The Lady of Lyons," 17th April, 1879.

Sir Edward Mortimer, in "The Iron Chest," 27th September, 1879.

Shylock, 1st November, 1879.

Tristan, in "Iolanthe," 20th May, 1880.

Louis and Fabien dei Franchi, in "The Corsican Brothers," 18th September, 1880.

*Synorix, in "The Cup," 3rd January, 1881.

Iago, 2nd May, 1881.

Modus, in (a scene from) "The Hunchback," 23rd July, 1881.

Digby Grant, in "Two Roses," 26th December, 1881.

Romeo, 8th March, 1882.

Benedick, 11th October, 1882.

Robert Macaire, 15th June, 1883.

Malvolio, in "Twelfth Night," 8th July, 1884.

Dr. Primrose, in "Olivia," 28th May, 1885.

*Mephistopheles, in "Faust," 19th December, 1885.

Werner, in "Werner," 1st June, 1887.

Robert Landry, in "The Dead Heart," 28th September, 1889.

*Edgar (the Master of Ravenswood), in "Ravenswood," 20th September, 1890.

Cardinal Wolsey, in "King Henry VIII.," 5th January, 1892.

Lear, in "King Lear," 10th November, 1892.

*Thomas Becket, in "Becket," 6th February, 1893.

*King Arthur, in "King Arthur," 12th January, 1895.

*Corporal Gregory Brewster, in "A Story of Waterloo," 4th May, 1895.

*Don Quixote, 4th May, 1895.

Iachimo, in "Cymbeline," 22nd September, 1896.

*Napoleon, in "Madame Sans-Gêne," 10th April, 1897.

*Peter the Great, in "Peter the Great," 1st January, 1898.

* Dr. Tregenna, in "The Medicine Man," 4th May, 1898.

* Maximilien Robespierre, in "Robespierre," 15th April, 1899.

Caius Marcus Coriolanus, in "Coriolanus," 15th April, 1901.

DRURY LANE.

* Dante, in "Dante," 30th April, 1903.

Irving played 671 parts: 428 in Edinburgh, 160 in Dublin, Glasgow, Greenock, Manchester, Bury, Oxford, Birmingham, Douglas, and Liverpool —5th March, 1860 to 30th July, 1866—and 83 in London. Of the characters represented by him in London, 33, indicated by an *, were original and 13 Shakespearean.

The signatories to the memorial to the Dean of Westminster asking that the remains of Henry Irving might be interred in the Abbey included: the Bishop of Ripon, Mr. George Meredith, Mr. Swinburne, Sir Frederick Treves, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Sir Theodore Martin, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Goschen, the Duchess of St. Albans, the Duke of Devonshire, the Provost of Trinity, Dublin, and the Principal of Glasgow University. The pall-bearers were Sir Squire Bancroft, Lord Tennyson, Mr. John Hare, Sir Alex. Mackenzie, Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree, Professor Sir James Dewar, Mr. A. W. Pinero, Lord Aberdeen, Sir Charles Wyndham, Lord Burnham, Mr. George Alexander, Sir L. Alma Tadema, R.A., Mr. J. Forbes Robertson and Mr. W. Burdett-Coutts, M.P.

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1884. Mr. Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry in America. Opinions of the press on "Hamlet," "The Merchant of Venice," "Louis XI.," "The Lyons Mail," "The Belle's Stratagem," "Charles the First," and "The Bells". 162 pages. Chicago.

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1903. The Lyceum and Henry Irving. By Austin Brereton. 120 illustrations in the text and 2 pictures in colour. 368 pp. Crown 4to. 21s. net. 100 copies on Japanese vellum, signed by Sir Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry. £6 6s. net. London and New York.

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1908. The Life of Henry Irving. By Austin Brereton. With a photogravure plate, 22 full-page illustrations in collotype, and 23 illustrations in the text. 2 vols. 8vo. 25s. net. London and New York.

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